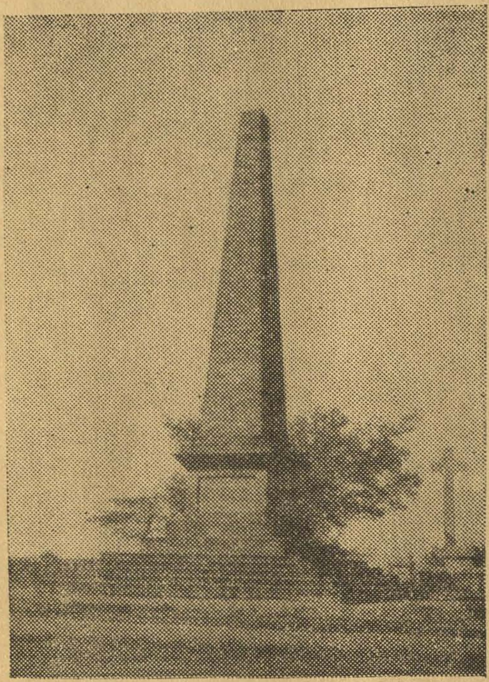
CHILLIANWALA



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SOME ASPECTS OF LEADERSHIP

by

MAJOR MOIN

Author of " Sind A Land of Legends,"
Dara Shikah, the Magnificent Prince
" Saints of Sind " etc., etc.



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To

My father

Late Mian Abdul Bari

The flame of whose life was consumed

in the struggle for freedom and independence

on the horizon of the subcontinent.

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FOREWORD

I am most pleased and honoured to write the foreword to this book on Leadership at CHILLIANWALA.

All of us professional soldiers are interested in military history. We should certainly study the subject as objectively as possible and learn lessons from every quarter of the world. Sentiments should not deprive us of learning good lessons from whatever the source.

What could be better however than reading about a battle in our own territory ? It will enable the more keen amongst us to go out to the battle field and actually "feel" the hallowed ground on which so many brave men fought for their ideals.

In reading this book you will find yourself marching with GOUGH and attacking with SHER SINGH. It is all very exhilarating and certainly makes the blood go round faster in our veins.

I congratulate the author for devoting so much time on such a study and I do hope that more of us in Pakistan will try and emulate him in making similar studies of other battles.

M. ATTIQ UR RAHMAN
Lieutenant General
(Ex-Governor of the Punjab)

Introduction

In the past while there were many who fell a victim to temptations and betrayed their own at the time of crisis, there were always some who remained faithful to the last. They carried out struggle against the invaders heroically, even at times knowing the outcome to be utter ruin and defeat for them. Their short-lived victories, triumphs and acts of valour against a superior and well-organised enemy could not be made known to their countrymen, because of the policy of foreign masters, but the great deeds of patriots cannot remain hidden for long.

During the national uprising of Sikhs in Punjab in 1849, the commendable part played by Raja Chutter Singh. Raja Sher Singh, Outar Singh, Jawahir Singh Nalwa, Diwan Mulraj, the Sikh governor of Multan and their comrades in organising and leading the Sikh nation against the British in those adverse conditions, evokes the admiration of all those who have patriotic feelings and have in their hearts national cause above all causes. This is the only battle of the two Sikh wars, where Sikhs could fight under their honest and capable leaders. During the first Sikh war the Sikh army in field had suffered from constant palace intrigues and was betrayed by its own commanders.

There were in the Sikh Army a few Muslim officers and a number of Muslim soldiers. The Sikh Artillery which played vital role in this battle was commanded by Ilahi Bukhsh. This was not a new thing. The relations of Sikhs and Muslims had become very cordial in the days of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The friendly relations between these two communities of the Punjab had to go a long way.

Jawahir Singh Nalwa was the cavalry commander, whose cavalry manoeuvres in this battle make a fascinating study. Jawahir's father was Hari Singh Nalwa, a renowned General of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. His adversary was General Thackwell, a

competent British Cavalry General. Brigadier Pope, a cavalry commander was known for courage and acts of valour. Though sick, he refused to be hospitalised, led the cavalry charge and fell alongwith his many riders.

Brigadier Pennycuick led the charge on foot through an unreconnoitered jungle. His men silenced the Sikh guns but he fell mortally wounded along with his son, a young subaltern. Both were buried in one grave.

Pennycuick's action at Chillianwala can be compared with that of General Lord Cardigan who was ordered to lead the charge of Light Brigade in the battle of Balaclava. Though such actions resulted in disaster, yet they showed the standard of discipline, the sense of honour and sacrifice on the part of British soldiers.

Raja Sher Singh Atariwala, a Sikh chief of Punjab waged war against the British at a time when the Sikh nation seemed to have lost their Empire, because of the treachery of certain chiefs and their rulers. He fought against General Gough, an experienced and seasoned British General and Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in India. With the handicaps and meagre resources he had during the 2nd Sikh war, many a time he outmanoeuvred and outwitted the British General. While General Gough was mostly on the offensive, Raja Sher Singh fought a defensive war displaying offensive posture. In the battle of Chillianwala General Gough and some of his commanders ignored some principles of war because of the results of the battle remained indecisive. Raja Sher Singh who had successfully outmanoeuvred and outwitted the British General did not pursue his gains. The violation of this rule of war made him suffer in the long run.

There are some other lessons of war brought out so vividly in this battle. For instance the consequences of under valuing the enemy strength and capabilities ; making frontal attack on a strongly fortified enemy position without reconnaisance and topographical information ; sending infantry in attack without artillery support ; making flank march in the presence of an enemy in position, fighting in jungle without observing the rules of jungle warfare, abandoning the battle positions and withdrawing

at a time when the battle had gone in favour and the lack of effort on the part of the commander in exploiting his success and launching counter-offensive in time. Both sides suffered the consequences of the faults which they had committed and the penalty was heavy.

This is the battle, which in fact had shaken the edifice of the British Empire in India. There was commotion in the British Parliament "when the news arrived that at Chillianwala, a British Army had fought to a draw by a wild Indian people". Duke of Wellington, then eighty, known for his cool and calm demeanour, on hearing what had happened at Chillianwala, got so much perturbed, that he told the unwilling Napier, "If you do not go (to India). I must".

There is no dearth of commendable deeds and display of valour and courage on the part of commanders and troops on both sides in this battle. Their praiseworthy deeds are recorded in books of history and the inscribed words on the British war memorial at Chillianwala show how close and terrible was this combat.

It took me ten years to compile this work on Chillianwala. Whiie describing the battle, at places, I have given versions and statements of the renowned military historians, critics and some of the officers and soldiers who participated in this battle. Who could describe a battle in more realistic and fascinating way than a soldier of the leading column, officer who led a charge or the chief who planned ?

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The Great Maharaja

When Napoleon abdicated and was sent to the Island of Elba, some of his trusted lieutenants migrated from France. The prominent amongst them were Ventura and Allard. They had fought under him in Spain and Italy. These two officers journeyed to Persia and got high ranks in the Persian Army. The Shah of Persia bestowed his favours on them. From Persia they came to Punjab and offered their services to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Later they were joined by another Neapolitan General of the name of Avitabile. There must have been something very special in the conduct and personality of the Maharaja which attracted these foreigners.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a Sikh ruler of Punjab about whom Captain Von Orlich writes, "In battle, he was always seen at the head of his troops and foremost in combat. In energy of will and endurance he was unequalled by any of his people. The want of education was covered by the splendid mental powers with which nature had endowed him, and prudence and knowledge of mankind enabled him to maintain himself in the high position. By means of excessive liberality he attached faithful servants and brave warriors to himself."————Travels in India, 1845.

This was the kind of man who is even now remembered with love and reverence by the people of Punjab. In the remotest village of Punjab, even an illiterate is familiar with a proverb, meaning, "Ranjit Singh, the one eyed, is a piece of pearl". He treated his subjects equally, without distinction of caste and creed.

While justice, liberality and kind-heartedness won him popularity amongst the people, the secret of his strength lay in his army. The British were reluctant to meet him on the battlefield, because of his grand army, comprising 82,000 troops (192 guns) trained and disciplined by Neapolitan Generals and other European Officers.

The European officers remodelled his army on the French pattern. That made the British to fight a number of 'Waterloos' with the Sikhs, after the death of the Maharaja. Besides the grand Army, he had his tributary chiefs and 'Jagirdars', who could put on the field a required number of troops on his demand. Raja Chatter Singh Atariwala was one of Maharaja's trusted friends and a 'Jagirdar'. Raja Sher Singh Atariwala, who fought the British in the battle of Chillianwala was son of Raja Chatter Singh. Like many others they remained loyal to the Maharaja and the Sikh cause to the last. Ranjit Singh's Empire extended from Sutlej to Indus including Kashmir. His army had invaded upto Khyber Pass and struggled hard to keep hold over this tribal territory like the British.

He entered Lahore Fort on July 7, 1799 and died there on 27th June, 1839 A.D. After his death, the Empire that he had built with sweat and blood started disintegrating. Struggle for power gave rise to palace intrigues and acts of treachery. The bullet marks on the walls of Lahore Fort gave evidence of the bloody drama that was staged after the death of the Maharaja. His successors proved unequal to the task and unworthy to rule. They fell victims to intrigues one after the other. Disunity and choas in the Sikh court led to a catastrophe which the Maharaja in his lifetime had managed to avert. It was the war with the British.


Maharaja Ranjit Singh on horse back.

The Weak Successors

After the death of Maharaja, Prince Kharek Singh ascended the throne. Some of the Sikh courtiers conspired with his son, Prince Nau Nihal Singh and carried out a palace coup. Nau Nihal Singh was proclaimed as the Maharaja, and Kharek Singh had to abdicate. Kharek Singh died within a year of his abdication, probably he was poisoned.

Nau Nihal Singh was returning after performing the last rights at the funeral pyre of his father and passing under a covered archway of Lahore Fort, when a portion of the structure fell, killing him. This young prince had inherited much of the ability of his grandfather Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

After the death of this able prince his mother Chand Kaur became master of the situation. But she was made to resign her claim to the throne in favour of Sher Singh, another reputed son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Sher Singh had hardly ruled for 2 years when he, along with his only son, were murdered.

After the death of Sher Singh, Dalip Singh, a 5-year-old son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh ascended the throne. As he was minor his mother Maharani Jindan Kaur became the Queen Regent.

With the death of able Sikh princes, the Sikh army had become leaderless. It got actively involved in the political affairs of the country. Influential Sikh courtiers started using it for their own political benefits. Maharani Jindan and her supporters were afraid of the army. Her fears took the shape of revenge, when a military council tried her brother on the charge of murder and got him shot. She had pointed Raja Lal Singh as Prime Minister and Tej Singh as Commander-in-Chief. Colonel Malleson, a British historian writes, "Lal Singh was a man of greater ability and cunning. Of the Sikh nobles, he and another Tej Singh had been foremost in recognising the necessity of curbing the insolence of the army. There is reason to believe, indeed that at this

early period, they had begun to nurture the idea, that if they should fail to master those all powerful soldiers, it would be wise policy to throw them on the bayonets of the British."

It appears that these traitors keeping in view their personal motives, failed to realise the outcome of this enterprise. They could not perceive that this adventure would not only paralyse the Sikh army but also the Sikh community which would suffer a severe setback. The objects of the traitors were as follows :—

*To destroy the Sikh army.

*To hand over the country to the British.

*To get reward from the victors for betraying their countrymen and making victory easy for them.

*To secure territory from the victors for Maharaja Dalip Singh to rule under their protection with his mother as regent.

Secret efforts were made to arouse in the ranks of the army a spirit of hostility towards the English. A psychological campaign was launched and when the right type of atmosphere was formed, the Sikh army at the encouragement of their so-called leaders crossed Sutlej for attacking the British.

What could be expected from such an enterprise when the ruler, the Prime Minister and the Commander-in-Chief had conspired to betray their army. The story of the first Sikh war is of betrayal and treachery. The planning was made in such a way as to ensure defeat. The troops were made to encamp, when they should have advanced and attacked. They were made to attack, when they should have avoided battle. The Commanders deserted their troops at a time when victory hung in Defective ammunition was supplied and at times a mixture of sand and lentil was supplied in lieu of gun powder. When the soldiers complained, it fell on deaf ears. When even these teacherous moves failed and the simple-minded Sikh soldiers carried the day, their General conspired during the night. In the battle of Feroze Shahr, on the first day, the British army was beaten. The British military historian Colonel Malleson comments on this battle in his book *Decisive Battles of India*. He writes, "Let us take a glance now at the Sikh camp. The brave, untutored warriors who defended it led by Generals who were betraying them, had, if they had only known it, won a victory. They had repulsed the British attack. They had driven back Litter (British General), forced Smith



Raja Lal Singh, the Chief Conspirator and Traitor who betrayed his army in the 1st Sikh War.
(*By courtesy of Museum, Lahore Fort*).

to retire, compelled even Gilbert to evacuate the position he gained and thrown the whole British army into disorder. What was more they had still 10,000 men under Tej Singh watching Ferozepur, who had not been engaged. The honest men amongst them either did not recognise the advantage they had gained or were powerless in the presence of those who saw in the attitude of Gilbert's Division, the certainty of a renewal of the attack on the marrow. To these divided councils were added the fatal suggestions of the traitors. The result was stormy councils, bitter words, plunder, desertion All cohesion vanished ; the moral, which alone could have insured victory, disappeared".

The Colonel continues, "When the day broke, then, the English line again advanced, it encountered no opposition."

In the battle of Sabraon the British won a decisive victory. How did this happen ? Colonel Malleson writes, "When the victory hung in balance, the traitor Commander-in-Chief Tej Singh instead of leading fresh men to sustain the failing strength of his right, fled across the bridge and sank its centre boat. Thenceforward, steadily advancing the assailants (British) though still gallantly opposed, carried one position after another, and pushing on pressed the defenders (Sikhs) towards the banks of, now to them, formidable river."

In the battle of Sabraon some very distinguished personalities of the Sikh nation perished. One of them was Sardar Sham Singh Atariwala, an able and brave Sikh chieftain who preferred to die honourably than to face defeat. He strongly disapproved the idea of waging war against the British and was passing retired life in Atari. The Rani's rebukes and taunts forced him to join the war. Sir Lepel H. Griffin comments in his book *The Punjab Chiefs*. "It is said that the night before Sabraon, Sardar Tej Singh counselled Sham Singh to fly with him on the first attack of the British. Sham Singh refused with scorn. On which Tej Singh angrily said, "If you are so brave you had better take your oath about it, for I believe you will come with me after all." Sardar Sham Singh called for a Granth (the Sikh scriptures), and solemnly swore that, should the Sikhs be defeated, he would never leave the trenches alive. On the morning of the battle, the 10th of February, he dressed himself in white, and having mounted his white mare, addressed his men, begging them, as

true sons of the Khalsa, to die rather than turn their backs on the enemy. During the first part of the battle he was everywhere present, urging the Sikhs to fight bravely ; and it was not till he saw that all was lost that he spurred forward against the 50th Regiment, waving his sword, and calling on his men to follow him. Some fifty of them obeyed the call, but were driven back into the river, and Sham Singh fell dead from his horse, pierced with seven balls. After the battle his servants swam over the river and begged permission to search for his body. The permission was granted ; and the body of the old Sardar, conspicuous by his white dress and long white beard, was discovered where the dead lay thickest. His servants placed the body on a raft and swam with it across the river, but it was not till the third day that it reached Atari". Many other true Sikhs like Sham Singh lost their lives in this battle.

After all the conspiracy succeeded. From military point of view the Sikh army was annihilated. While the Governor-General and General Gough remained at Lahore Fort at the head of 20,000 troops, portions of the Sikh army came to Lahore to be paid up and disbanded. Once abode of the Sikh lion (Ranjit Singh), the Fort of Lahore was garrisoned by English Regiments. A convention was entered into for the administration of the Government by a council at Lahore, under British Superintendent during the minority of Raja Dalip Singh. The country between Bias and Sutlej, known as Jullundur Doab, comprising the districts of Jullundur, Hoshiarpur and Kangrah were transferred to the British. The British retaining only the Suzerainty, sold the valley of Kashmir to Raja Gulab Singh for only five million rupees.

Disgust and gloom overtook the Sikh soldiers whose regiments had been disbanded. The intelligentsia of the Sikh army had started realising the causes which had led to their defeat and humiliation. The secret of the planned betrayal could not be kept for long. The feeling of revenge kept on mounting high in the minds of the people. Such feelings and sentiments of the disbanded 'Khalsa' troops and the Sikh patriots were the root cause of the second Sikh war. In the battle of Chillianwala the Sikhs under their able commanders tried to pay the bebts, which they had owed to the British. This time, the treachery seldom worked.



Prince Nau Nihal Singh

(*By courtesy of Fort Museum, Lahore*).



Sardar Sham Singh Attariwala
(*By courtesy of Faqeer Waheeduddin*).

National Uprising

After the 1st Sikh War, Punjab remained apparently quiet under the control of the British. But the Sikh nation had not reconciled to the idea of foreign subjugation. After the battle of Sabraon the soldiers and the people from whom they were enlisted had recognised that they had been betrayed, that they and their country had been sacrificed to the chiefs who were now reaping the reward. There was a danger of national uprising. The English were under the wrong impression that there would be no war in India for the next ten years. Lord Hardinge, the British Governor-General had ordered a reduction in the army and had generally accepted the idea that there would not be a single shot fired in India for another ten years. Seeing that the affairs in the Punjab were progressing in a satisfactory manner, Sir Henry Lawrence, the British resident at Lahore left for England with Lord Hardinge. Sir F. Currie succeeded him. The crisis which occurred soon after Sir Currie had assumed control at Lahore, was like this.

Mulraj, the son of Sawan Mall succeeded his father in 1844 as Diwan (Governor) of Multan. On his succession Diwan Mulraj was expected to pay thirty lacs to Lahore Durbar. At that time the Government of Lahore was in a state of revolution and the payment could not be made. After the 1st Sikh War in 1846 when Lal Singh, the Premier of Maharani Jindah demanded payment, and sent troops for this purpose, the matter took a serious turn. By that time the treachery of Lal Singh and Tej Singh had been known to the people. Everyone had known it that these two persons were amongst those who destroyed the Sikh army and paved way for the British victory. Naturally a patriot like Diwan Mulraj would have felt hesitant to abide by the orders sent by Lal Singh. Mulraj refused compliance and routed the troops sent by Lal Singh near Jhang.

The British intervened and persuaded Mulraj to accept the following terms :

1. Mulraj should give up the district of Jhang, north of Multan and also one-third of the territory held by him.

2. He should pay twenty lacs as the succession fee.
3. He should raise the revenues more than one-third from the districts held by him.

For the time being Mulraj accepted the conditions put forward by the victors, but he was not satisfied. The regency under the influence of the British resident also passed an order giving his (Mulraj) people a right of appeal against his judicial decisions. It specially weighed upon him.

Diwan Mulraj came to Lahore and tendered his resignation. He was received by John Lawrence and after a good deal of efforts, he was made to agree on the following.

1. That his resignation should be accepted, but it should be kept secret from Lahore Durbar.
2. His resignation should take effect from the end of the following April, upto which time Mulraj was to account for the revenue.
3. British officers should proceed to Multan to be initiated by Mulraj into the administration of the country and ultimately to be installed by him in his place.

Mulraj apparently accepted the above conditions and returned to Multan. The British made another effort that Mulraj should withdraw the resignation. But he refused. Then Sir F. Currie, the British resident with the consultation of Lahore Durbar resolved to carry out the 3rd clause of the agreement made between John Lawrence and Mulraj, and decided to send two English officers to Multan to be initiated in the affairs of the province. For this purpose Mr. Currie selected P A Vans Agnew of the civil service and Lieutenant W. A. Anderson.

At that time the national feelings amongst the Sikhs were rising against the British. The revengeful spirit and the determination to regain the lost honour and territories from the foreigners prevailed everywhere. Diwan Mulraj was amongst those who had not reconciled to the idea of foreign subjugation and he had planned to overthrow the invaders and punish the traitors. It appears that the plan he made along with the other nationalists was as follows :—

1. To create general awakening amongst the Sikh national-

ists by making them realise that they were betrayed and that the British did not vanquish them in a fair fight.

2. To wait till Sir Henry Lawrence would leave for England, and start hostilities at the hottest season of the year.

The Sikh nationalists had succeeded in creating general awakening. A British historian writes, "Our two years sway had not proved popular, and the able-bodied flocked to the rebel standards of the chiefs, even from districts under our immediate supervision and control, without the slightest check and hindrance."

Such was the state of affairs when Mr. Currie despatched Agnew and Anderson to Multan for getting training and ultimately taking over the administration of the province from Diwan Mulraj. Fourteen hundred troops from the Sikh army were detailed to escort them. The contingent was commanded by a Sikh chief Sirdar Kahan Singh, who was to succeed Diwan Mulraj as governor of Multan. Sirdar Kahan Singh was loyal to the British cause and the Sikhs regency.

The hot season had set in. The two British officers and Sirdar Kahan Singh travelled by water, while the troops marched by land route. The two parties met each other near Multan on 19th April. They encamped at the Idgah, a place near the fort and about a mile from Mulraj's residence. Diwan Mulraj met them on 18th and it was decided that he would hand over the fort to Kahan Singh the following morning.

Courage of the Englishmen

On 19th, early in the morning Sirdar Kahan Singh with the two British officers entered the fort. They were received by Diwan Mulraj, who showed them the fort and handed over the keys. The new masters removed Mulraj's men from their posts and planted their own men. Then they summmoned Mulraj's garrison and tried to pacify them, as they had shown sullen feeling at being thrown out of employment. After that they rode towards the camp.

On their way back, while crossing the bridge over the ditch, a soldier of the Mulraj's garrison attacked Agnew with a spear. Agnew fell and jumped up to return the blow. By that time the native rushed in with his sword and inflicted two serious wounds on him. The news of this incident spread like wild fire in the fort, and the ousted garrison of Mulraj came pouring forth and attacked Anderson. Mulraj on seeing this bloody riot put spurs to his horse and rode fast to his house.

Anderson was more seriously injured than Agnew. While the former was carried away by his own men, the latter was extricated from the mob by Sirdar Kahan Singh and carried on his elephant. Both the wounded Englishmen were brought to Idgah.

Mr. Agnew who was less injured displayed calmness and courage in that trying situation. He sent a letter to Mulraj asking him to explain, if he had no hand in the incident. He also directed him to seize the guilty parties and bring them to the Idgah. He sent this message at 11 A.M., and after waiting for three hours for the reply Agnew despatched letters to Herbert Edwardes at Bannu and General Van Cortland, Governor of Dera Ismail Khan asking for help.

At 4 o'clock Diwan Mulraj sent the reply that he would neither give up the guilty nor come himself. He also stated

that ail the garrison, Hindus and Muslims were in revolt and that the British officers should look after themselves.

The national uprising was in progress. The Sikh leaders had planned the incident in such a way that the hostilities between them and the British were bound to break. The outbreak occurred in Multan with Mulraj placed at the head of the movement. When the two wounded Britishers were groaning in the Idgah, Mulraj was presiding at a council of his chiefs. That same evening Mulraj's troops carried away the carriage cattle of the English officers and of their escorts, in order to prevent their flight.

Agnew though seriously wounded deployed his troops and the guns to meet the enemy attack. He made another effort to persuade Diwan Mulraj to obey the orders of Lahore regency. In reply he received gun fire from the walls of the fort and the house of Mulraj. Then emissaries came to tempt the escort of British officers. They succeeded in winning them over for the national cause and by sunset all the troops had gone over to join the nationalists except Sirdar Kahan Singh, a few horsemen, domestic servants of the British officers and the 'Munshis' of their office.

In that hopeless situation Agnew sent a party to Mulraj to sue for peace. Diwan sent back the reply that the British officers should quit the country and that the attack upon them would cease.

At dusk, the rebels who had not yet tasted blood and were out of control, attacked the English. It was a huge mob which assaulted this small party of unfortunate persons. The two British officers were hacked to pieces and Sirdar Kahan Singh was conveyed a prisoner in the presence of Mulraj. He was taunted, abused and insulted.

The reaction was obvious. The murder of the two British officers by the nationalists was a signal for war. The British forces were on the move and in the initial stages with the help of certain Indian princes and friendly tribes succeeded in winning some battles against Diwan Mulraj.



Diwan Moolraj, Sikh Governor of Multan.
(*By courtesy of Lahore Museum*).

Mulraj fights the British

Mulraj fought against Edwardes near the village Kinairi on the bank of Chenab and lost the battle. The battle raged for nine hours. Then Mulraj took the field at Sadusam and fought against the combined forces of Edwardes, General Cortland, General Lake, and friendly tribes and princes of the British. He was defeated again and retired to Multan.

General Gough, the British Commander-in-Chief was hesitant to start the war in the hot season. So he kept on delaying the operation. But the victory at Sadusam incited Mr. Currie to action and he directed the British brigade at Lahore to march upon Multan. Currie's conduct in this respect was confirmed very grudgingly by the British Governor-General.

As the British resident at Lahore had decided to 'reduce' Multan fort, and the Governor-General had given his consent, Lord Gough had to arrange for the strength and composition of the British force. He then ordered that Lahore Brigade should be reinforced by that at Ferozepur. This force consisted of seven thousand and five hundred men.

Then Mr. Currie with the consent of the regency sent a purely Sikh force under the command of Sher Singh Atariwala. Sher Singh was one of the prominent members of regency and an able military commander. He was sent with five thousand Sikh troops in aid of the British for conquering the fort of Multan. The British force sent from Lahore was put under the command of General Whish.

General Whish left Lahore on 24th July and encamped at Sital-ki-Mari near Multan on 18th August. Next day he was joined by the Brigade from Ferozepur commanded by Brigadier Salter. There Whish found Edwardes' army, composed of fourteen thousand infantry and about eight thousand cavalry, camping at Surajkund, a place about six miles away from Multan.

The British force was kept away from the city walls, because Diwan Mulraj was fighting hard to keep the enemy at a distance. But on the arrival of reinforcements the situation changed. The British force now consisted of thirty thousand troops. General Whish then instructed Edwardes to advance towards Multan.

The whole British force moved together and encountered very tough resistance on the way. Mulraj's men put up a gallant fight and the British force had to halt two miles short of the city walls. In this fighting General Lake and Sir Henry Pollock distinguished themselves.

Sher Singh takes over Command

In the hours of darkness General Whish and Major Napier from Engineers carried out a thorough reconnaissance. These two officers with their staff crept as close as possible to the fort. There they formed the opinion that reducing the fort without the siege guns and other necessary equipment was impossible. The siege train reached on September 4 and the siege began on September 7. On September 9 a night attack made by the English was repulsed with heavy losses. On the 12th, Whish after fighting a tough battle where both sides suffered heavy casualties could make an advance of eight to nine hundred yards towards the fort: There an incident took place which changed the course of events. There was an open rebellion in Hazara and Sirdar Chatter Singh was the head of the National movement. Chatter Singh was father of Sher Singh, the Commander of Sikh contingent now supporting the British in the siege of Multan. Whether it was preplanned or Sher Singh was later persuaded by his father to support the national cause, could not be ascertained. At this critical hour of the siege, Sher Singh with his force lent support to the national movement and entered the fort. This incident took place on 14th September, which compelled General Whish to raise the siege and retire to Sadusam. There he waited for further reinforcements. The raising of siege adversely affected the British interest and there were more defections and rebellions in Punjab. The Sikh nation had resolved to strike a blow for independence.

It needs mentioning that during the course of events Maharani Jindan, the queen regent, was involved in a conspiracy and was exiled. Most of her supporters who were found guilty were either hanged or shot. So the Junta which had caused the Sikh defeat in the 1st Sikh War and destroyed the Sikh army had been liquidated except Maharaja Ghulab Singh, who was safe in Kashmir under the protection of the British. The nationalists had also taken notice of him. The main approaches from where he could enter the plains in aid of the British were blocked.

The situation had so much worsened in Punjab that Lord Dalhousie at Barrakpur made a declaration of war against the Sikhs. The Commander-in-Chief Lord Gough assembled an army in Ferozepur and named it "The Army of the Punjab".

While the British Commander-in-Chief was assembling the force at Ferozepur, he was joined by General Cureton, Brigadier Colin Campbell, Brigadier Wheeler, Brigadier Godley with their brigades. General Thackwell was the Divisional General of cavalry. The entire British force was now composed of seven brigades of infantry, four of cavalry and numerous artillery.

It needs mentioning here that while General Whish was encamping in the vicinity of Multan and holding Mulraj's force in check, General Gough moved with his force which was composed of twelve thousand five hundred infantry of whom one-fourth were Europeans and three thousand four hundred cavalry comprising three British regiments. He reached the village of Noiwala about thirteen miles from Chenab on 20th November.

By then Sher Singh had assumed the Command of the Sikh army. He had come out with his force and encamped on the right bank of Chenab. He had sent covering troops through the fords towards the left bank for delaying the enemy's advance and sending early warning. These covering troops occupied a position three miles from the left bank of Chenab near Ramnuggur, ten miles from the British Camp.

British Loss at Ramnuggur

On 22nd November the British force under General Gough resumed advance towards Ramnuggur. Near this place, they observed the Sikh detachments. Those were the covering troops of the nationalists. Their main body was encamped on the right bank. Lord Gough, the dashing British Commander-in-Chief was accompanying his advance guard troops. Colonel Melleson, the British historian writes in his book, the *Decisive Battles of India*, "In the presence of an enemy Lord Gough could think only of how to get at him. At that time of supreme excitement all ideas of strategy, of tactics, of the plan of the campaign, vanished from his mind. How a momentary triumph might be gained became his dominant and fixed thought. On the occasion of which I am writing a calm and cool leader would have rejoiced to see an enemy voluntarily abandoning in the face of a military demonstration, a splendid military position and retreating. But no thought of that kind ever antered the brain of Lord Gough. He had joined and placed himself at the head of the advanced party of cavalry that morning, unknown to the majority of his staff and he now saw the enemy retiring without his striking a blow! Little reckoned he of the fact that his own advanced party was few in numbers, that he had left the main body of his troops behind him without orders and without a head, it never occurred to him to reflect that in all probability the Sikhs were but retiring to a selected position, covered with heavy guns on the right bank of the river. He thought of nothing but that the enemy were escaping him when they were within measureable distance of small force".

This small action fought between the nationalists covering troops and the British advance guard, where the nationalists triumphed needs to be written in detail. Because it brings out some good military lessons.

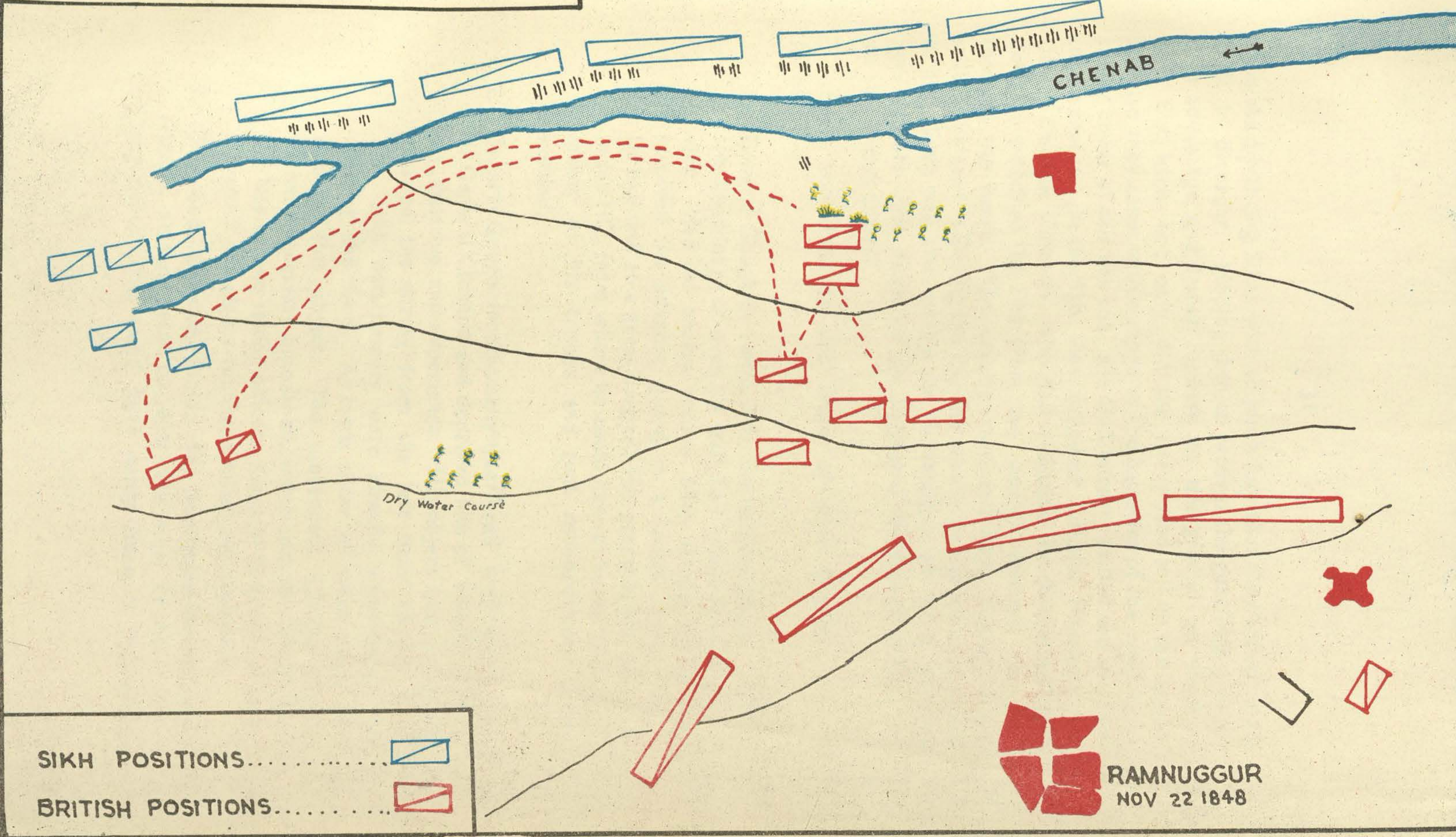
The British advance guard consisted of four cavalry regiments

and horse artillery under General Cureton, one infantry brigade under Brigadier Godley and two batteries of artillery. The composition of the Sikh covering troops is not known with certainty. But it appears from the detail of the encounter that it was a mixed force of cavalry and infantry capable of holding the enemy for a little time. The Sikhs had deployed heavy artillery on the right bank with a view to cover the retreat of these troops.

It so happened that when the British advance guard reached quite close to the nationalists covering troops, Sher Singh ordered them to withdraw through the fords and join the main body on the right bank. Lord Gough who was riding with the advance guard troops on seeing them withdrawing became impatient and ordered the cavalry and horse artillery to charge the enemy crossing the ford. The action is vividly described by Colonel Malleson, he writes. "Rendered wild at this thought he dashed his cavalry and horse artillery at them as they were crossing the ford. The horse artillery guns of Lane and Warner opening upon the enemy engaged in a movement of retreat caused them first some slight loss, but as the British guns pressed on, they came as might have been expected, under the fire of enemy's guns on the right bank, a fire so superior to their own that their position became untenable. The English then endeavoured to retire. But this had become a matter of great difficulty. Their guns one of them especially had become deeply embedded in the heavy road of the river bank. It was difficult to extricate them and after superhuman efforts, the English, to save the remainder, were forced to abandon that one". Colonel Malleson continues. "To cover the retreat of the British artillery Captain Ouvry, with a squadron of the 3rd Light Dragoons, made a gallant charge on a body of the enemy who had taken up a position on an islet surrounded by stagnant pools. This charge was followed by others ; but the Sikh infantry cool and resolute, maintained on the cavalry a galling fire, and then, as the charges ceased, advanced to capture the abandoned gun."

He continues, "Burning with indignation at the very idea of the enemy carrying off a trophy in the very first action of the campaign, Colonel Havelock, commanding the 14th Light Dragoons, demanded and obtained permission to drive the enemy back. The 14th, accompanied by the 5th Native Cavalry, charged, then

THE COMBAT OF RAMNUGGUR



upon the advancing Sikhs with so much fury that they rolled them back in disorder. Hoping then to recover the gun, 14th pursued their advantage, and dashed forward to the ground on which it lay. But here, not only did the heavy sand tell on the horses, but also they came within range of the batteries of the right bank. Under cover of this fire too, the Sikh infantry rallied and returned to the charge. In the fight that followed Colonel Havelock was slain. General Cureton, who had witnessed the charge, galloping down to withdraw the 14th from the unequal contest, was shot through the heart. The cavalry then fell back, leaving the gun still in the sand. During the day the enemy succeeded in carrying it off. Such was the combat of Ramnuggur, an affair entailing considerable—the more to be regretted because of useless loss on the British army."

Some comments on this action of short duration are as follows :—

1. General Gough by riding with the advance guard, without the knowledge of even his staff, had taken an unnecessary risk. Had the enemy troops been strong enough and involved his advance guard in a battle, then he could be exposed to a great danger. His presence was essential in his HQ, from where he could have directed the movements of his troops and sent reinforcements where needed.

2. General Gough unnecessarily interfered with the troops of General Cureton and deprived him of making use of his intiative and experience. His object must have been to expel the enemy from the left bank of the river. The Sikh detachments were already withdrawing and crossing the ford. A mere show of arms could have achieved this object. The subsequent fighting appears to be unnecessary bloodshed, which cost the British army the loss of two senior officers, General Cureton, Colonel Havelock and eighty-four men killed and wounded.

3. Brig.-Gen. Cureton should not have gone himself in the bullet ridden field to extricate one of his cavalry regiments. He could have easily done it by sending

an officer from his staff or a messenger. His loss to the British army, at that time was really great.

4. After the withdrawal of the British force from the fords the Sikhs dominated no man's land and carried away the gun that was embedded in the loose sand as a trophy of war.
5. This encounter raised the moral of the Sikh troops. They now could boast that in their first encounter with the British, they had shown their metal.
6. The British force had to discontinue the advance, because crossing the river from that place against a well deployed and determined enemy was not possible.



A scene of combat near Ramnuggur
(*By courtesy of Museum, Lahore Fort*).



Brig Gen Cureton.

Critics Views

So the British force encamped at Ramnuggur. Lord Gough was impatient to cross the river from a safe place and fall upon the enemy. Sir H. Durand, a competent critic of that time suggested what Lord Gough should have done at that time. He wrote in an article, published in Calcutta Review, Vol. XV, Page 261, "He should have remained in observation on the left bank of Chenab; to regard himself as covering the siege of Multan (by General Whish) and holding Sher Singh in check till that place fell; to cover Lahore and cut off all supplies from the districts on the left bank of the Chenab reaching the enemy; jealously to watch the movements of the latter, whether, to the northward or southward; these should have been Lord Gough's objects. So long as Sher Singh was disposed to have remained on the right bank of the Chenab, Gough should have left him undisturbed and patiently have awaited the fall of Multan."

Colonel Malleson writes, "But Gough cared for none of these things: He saw only the enemy. The enemy being on the right bank, he must cross to that bank and get at him. His mission as he read it, was to seek the enemy where ever he could be found, attack him and beat him. A larger aim than this lay outside the range of his mental vision."

It is however easy to criticise such actions of commanders, outside the field of battle. Still easier to comment in a house full of comforts, in leisure time on the battles fought, won or lost by the great commanders. But only he knows, who commands in the hazards of war, the implications and importance of his actions. These two worthy British writers might have justly commented on and criticised Lord Gough's actions, but at this particular stage they could not visualise the overall situation prevailing in the country properly. Lord Gough was faced with the situation as follows :—

1. There was national uprising in Punjab. The Sikhs were

in revolt and the flames of rebellion were spreading fast.

2. Sher Singh's army was increasing every day, because the Sikh bands were joining him in increasing numbers.

3. The Amir of Afghanistan had promised to send troops in aid to the Sikhs. The troops were on the move and Sirdar Chatter Singh, the head of the national movement at Hazara, was also planning with his troops to join his son Sher Singh.

Under these circumstances I feel Lord Gough was quite justified in planning to attack Sher Singh without delay.

Gough's Plan

As I have mentioned the British Commnder-in-Chief seeing the enemy holding a strong position on the right bank of the river and thinking of fording the river from there as impracticable, had encamped near Ramnuggur. There were three fords between Ramnuggur and Wazirabad, a place about twenty-five miles to the East of it and on the same side of the river. These were the fords of Ghari, Ranikan and Ali Sher. The first one was eight miles and the other two about thirteen miles from the British camp. There was also a ford near Wazirabad.

Lord Gough's operational plan was as follows :—

1. To hold the enemy in its present position by a display of force.
2. To detach a force to cross the river from a safe and suitable ford with a view to fall upon enemy's flank.
3. Once the detached force reaches at a striking distance of enemy's flank, then the holding force also to move forward, sandwiching the enemy.

Lord Gough's plan was admirable and practicable, but he was faced with a General, who was in no way inferior to him. Sher Singh was an experienced, vigilant and shrewed Sikh General. The fords were closely watched by the Sikh detachments.

But there seems to be one snag in the training of the Sikh army. Besides other factors this neglect had also cost them success in the battle of Sabroan. They trusted too much to darkness. They would often leave vital ground and enemy likely approaches unguarded at night and the British always benefited out of this failing.

Turning Move

The British Commander-in-Chief waited for eight days in Ramnuggur and when heavy artillery arrived he directed Sir Joseph Thackwell on 3rd December to march at midnight with his force for turning the enemy's flanks and crossing the river at the ford of Ranikan. His force consisted of three troops of horse artillery, two light field batteries, two eighteen pounder guns, five cavalry regiments and eight infantry battalions. That made in all about eight to nine thousand men. It was accompanied by a baggage train. Brigadier Sir Colin Campbell commanded the infantry units. This turning force was scheduled to reach the ford of Ranikan at 8 o'clock in the morning. But due to bad guides and loss of way at certain places the force reached three hours late. There the situation was not encouraging for the British. The Information gained by the General Staff was misleading. Because it was impracticable to ford the river from Ranikan. The river bed was far broader than was actually reported, the flow of water was very swift and there was dangerous quick sand areas in the ford. The opposite bank was out of range of the guns and was guarded by the enemy.

The British got baffled and cursed the General Staff. General Thackwell was so much disappointed that he even decided to return to the camp. But finally it was decided to make an attempt for crossing the river near Wazirabad. The forces reached there at night. There was John Nicholson, a very resourceful civil officer, who later became famous in British India as a political officers. Through his informers he had known that the Sikh detachments were withdrawn during night and the ford was easy to cross. He even provided big boats and other facilities to General Thackwell.

Colonel Malleson writes, "Not accustomed to attempt night surprises themselves (Sikhs), they posted no guard. But for

this, under the circumstances Thackwell might have again baffled. The darkness of the night and the neglect of the Sikhs, however, greatly befriended him."

General Thackwell got his force across river during the night.

Surprise at Sadulapur

Now let us have a look at the Sikh camp. By dawn Sher Singh had known the advance of Thackwell's force. Colonel Malleson writes, "Whilst the artillery fight was thus raging, Sher Singh was made aware of Thackwell's successful passage and his subsequent movement. The idea which flashed across his mind was an idea worthy of a great commander. He resolved to march at once to crush Thackwell before Gough could possible come to his support. He would then deal with Gough."

Sher Singh immediately withdrew his force about two miles leaving the rear parties and the guns to contain the enemy on the left bank. He had planned to leave behind the rear parties, few guns and marched forthwith, with the remaining force to fall upon Thackwell. But a thought made him modify his plan. He feared that if Gough got to know his move, he would at once cross the river and follow him. In that case he would be between two fires. With this idea in mind, he decided to leave behind the main body and marched with 10,000 men against Thackwell. At times big risks do succeed in war and shirking from risks in war seldom produce encouraging results. Sher Singh after deciding to take bold action in attacking *en masse* the force of Thackwell, resorted to a half measure and half measures seldom succeed in war.

Sher Singh outwitted Gough in moving his force. The British Commander-in-Chief was completely deceived about the movement of the Sikh General. On 2nd December he had been pushing forward his breast work and batteries in order to encounter a formidable enemy. He came to know about his move at night on the 3rd, while Sher Singh had attacked Thackwell near Sadulapur at 11 o'clock on 3rd December.

Sher Singh had not only deceived Lord Gough, but had taken Thackwell by surprise. Thackwell did not have advance information of his enemy's approach. They got to know of their arrival only when an artillery shell exploded in the air in front of them. It

shows that while encamping, Thackwell's force had not sent mobile patrols, screens or covering troops for obtaining early warning of enemy's approach. And if they were sent, they did not carry out the task assigned to them.

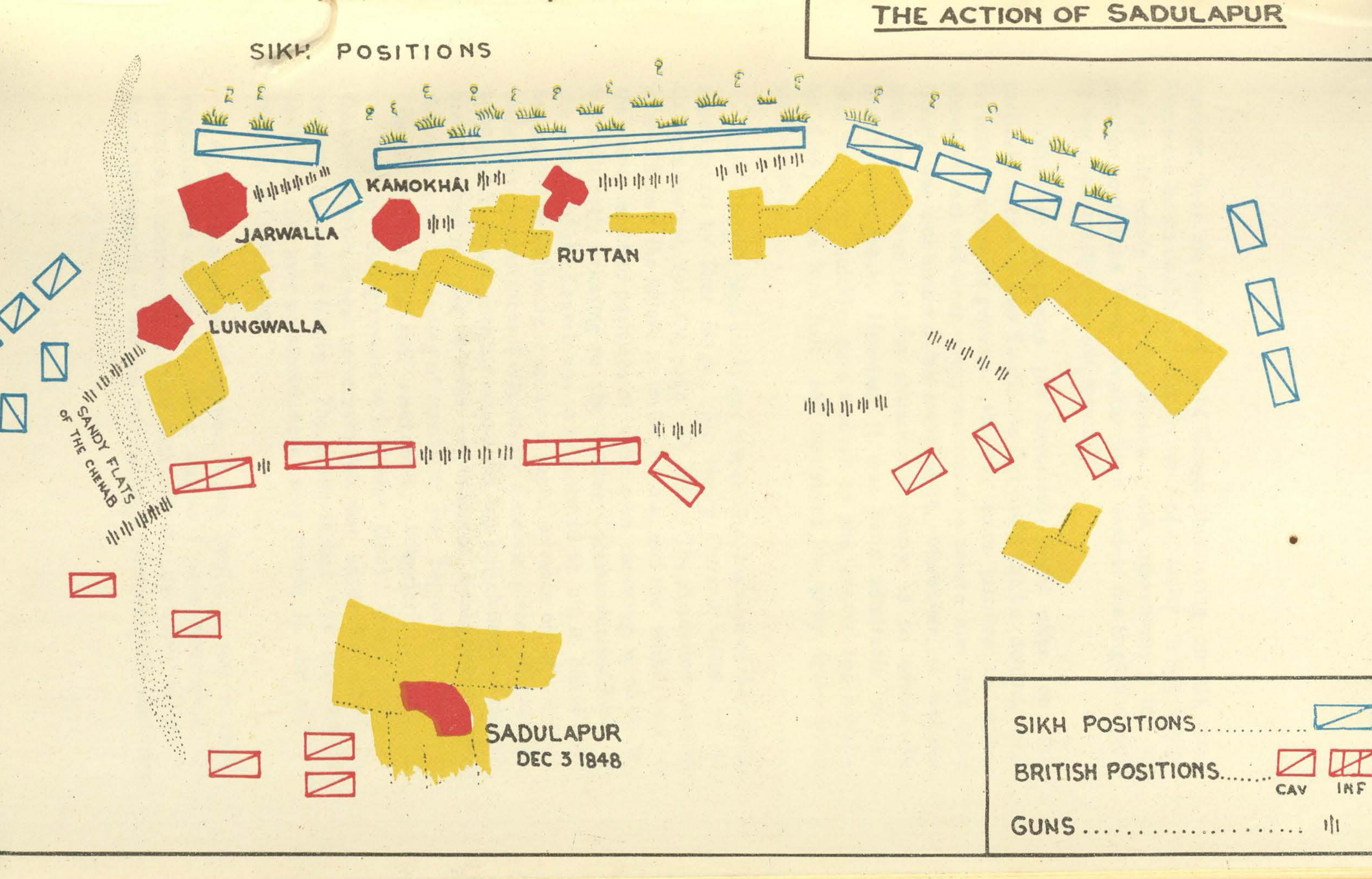
Lawrence Archer gives a version of Captain Thackwell, the ADC to General Thackwell (Calcutta Review, page 266), "It was difficult to believe," he wrote, "that this shot was fired by the enemy, for the scouts and patrols had raised no alarm of their approach." Archer comments, "The question naturally arises ; had any scouts been sent out or any patrols been posted ?"

Colonel Malleson writes, "Thackwell's men had but just piled arms and fallen out, when suddenly, a peculiar sound was heard over head and on looking up, a shell was discovered bursting in midair, between the British line and the villages in front. After this came round shot. It was Sher Singh who had thus surprised the British, badly posted facing three villages which he now held. In that supreme hour he (Sher Singh) must have deeply regretted that he had not brought with him his whole army !"

General Thackwell at once ordered his troops to retire two hundred yards and form up. The Sikh were pouring in a continuous fire from their guns. This fire would have taken a heavy toll of the British force, had the British General not ordered his men to go to ground and keep patient. Sher Singh had purposely ordered his gunners to keep on firing. Because he knew the British would react sharply and attack him. But General Thackwell patiently waited for five hours. During this period the Sikh cavalry charged twice and tried to out flank the enemy. But their attacks were repulsed. At 4 o'clock the British artillery also opened up and the duel continued till sunset.

At night Sher Singh being haunted by the thought of Gough's crossing the river, fell back to the main position. So the action of Sadulapur was no more than an artillery duel. The British suffered eighty casualties.

Colonel Malleson writes, "In this action the armies never came to close quarter ; the English, because Sher Singh held a very strong position in the three villages ; the Sikhs, because their leader feared to commit himself to a battle when he might, at any


THE ACTION OF SADULAPUR
SIKH POSITIONS
KAMOKHAI
JARWALLA
RUTTAN
LUNGWALLA
SANDY FLATS OF THE CHENAB
SADULAPUR
DEC 3 1848
SIKH POSITIONS
BRITISH POSITIONS
CAV
INF
GUNS

moment, hear the guns of Lord Gough thundering on his rear. There can be no doubt but that his want of audacity in not bringing up his whole army lost him a great opportunity ; for no position could have been weaker than that of the English — and in war opportunities do not return."

Whatever comments the historians, might offer on this particular action of Sher Singh, one fact could not be denied, that his fears were quite genuine. He was quite justified to worry about his rear and what surety was there to ensure him that Lord Gough was not aware of his movements. Moreover, it was not possible for him in that situation to know as to where the British were weak. However it was quite admirable of him that he acted quickly, gave a punch to the enemy approaching his flank, made him halt and thus saved his army from being sandwiched.

Lord Gough's plan could not materialise, because of the timely action taken by Sher Singh. Sir Henry Durand writes in the Calcutta Review, Vol. XV, page 266-267, "The ill-advised passage of the Chenab, the failure to strike a blow, and the withdrawal of the enemy intact to positions of their own choosing, were doubtless sufficiently irritating to the British Commander-in-Chief. If the passage of the Chenab was to be justified at all, it could only be justified by following it up by a rapid advance on the enemy. Under the circumstances it was simply a useless piece of bravado. In spite of it, Gough with his main army was still chained to the left bank ; he had no reserve ; the commissariat arrangements were still incomplete ; a feeling of insecurity was beginning to arise in Lahore ; Multan was still unsubdued ; Wheeler's brigade was still busy in crushing revolts in Jullundur Doab. In spite of Lord Gough's bulletin, it was universally felt that upto that point the campaign had been a failure. The public, in fact, had lost all the confidence they ever possessed, never very much, in the military capacity of Lord Gough."

Again it is a matter of opinion. No doubt it was a sound suggestion of a competent critic, but as I have mentioned, the situations a commander is faced with and the decisions taken by him in the hazards of war can only be judged and weighed correctly

by the persons around him at that particular stage. In war the commanders are not always faced with the situations of their own choice or liking. They are at times faced with adverse circumstances and worst conditions. Under those environments even sound plans made by them can fall flat, due to reasons beyond their power or control.

Comments

General Gough's plan to out-flank the enemy was very sound. Had it materialised, then the bloodly battles of Chillianwala and Gujrat would not have fought. But the failure of this operation was due to following :

1. The reconnaisance of the fords was not carried out properly. The officers who were detailed for reconnaisance did not carry out their task properly. Probably due to the fear of the enemy they submitted second hand information, which was accepted without evaluation by the staff. The Commander made his plan based on this information. When the units reached the ford, they found it occupied by the enemy. The troops had to bypass it and continued marching in search of another suitable ford. That made them march a longer distance than originally planned. So the operation was delayed, surprise lost and troops were exhausted due to overfatigue.

2. After crossing the river General Thackwell advanced and took position near the village of Sadulapur. The men were exhausted due to long marches and the winter night they had passed without food and fire. In that poor, physical state they were unable to carry out their task properly. What alertness and vigilance could be expected next day from the troops broken down by long marches, hunger and fatigue in that winter night.

3. According to Captain Thackwell ADC to General Thackwell, the operation of turning force was not conducted with care and vigilance. Colonel Malleson writes that British Commanders conducted this campaign with extraordinary carelessness.

4. It was due to the incompetence of the General Staff that Lord Gough could not know about the move of

Sher Singh's force. He did not know even when the whole Sikh force moved to another selected position leaving behind only the rear parties and few guns to deceive him. In this gross negligence the formation commanders and their staff of front and flanking formations were equally to be balmed for not getting the uptodate information about the enemy's movements and passing in time to the higher headquarters.

Taking into account all these factors one can reach the conclusion that had the operational plan of British Commander-in-Chief carried out vigorously, honestly and wisely by his General Staff and the formation commanders, he could have won victory.

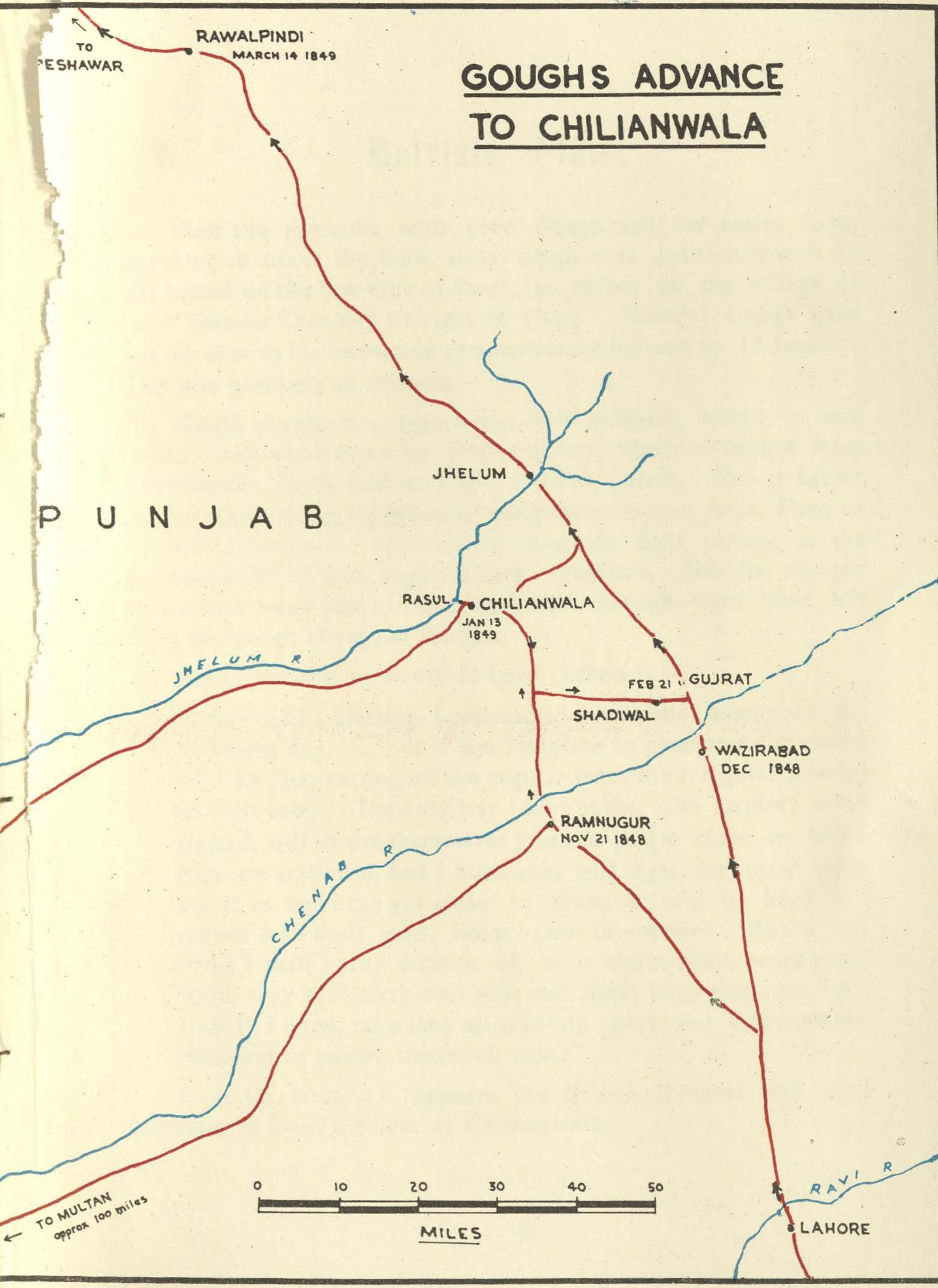
Move Towards Chillianwala

The action of Sadulapur was fought on 3rd December and the same night Sher Singh after giving a punch to the enemy retired to join his main body. From there he led his army a few miles away to occupy a new position on the bank of Jhelum, leaving behind rear parties and the guns to deceive the British force.

The British Commander-in-Chief was still unaware of Sher Singh's movements. On 4th December he despatched Sir Walter Gilbert with a force of cavalry to the right bank of the river. Gilbert brought the information that the enemy had left his original position. The bridge of boats was in progress and Lord Gough with his force crossed on 18th December.

General Thackwell had also resumed his march towards the enemy. But his reconnaisance system was so bad and the attitude of the local so hostile, that the mobile columns he sent for finding out the enemy's location brought the wrong information that the enemy had crossed the River Jhelum. Then there were moves and countermoves of the two opposing armies. On 10th January Lord Dalhousie sent pressing orders to Lord Gough to take the offensive and strike the enemy with the least possible delay. Because the fort of Attock held till then by a British officer had surrendered to the Sikhs. This had opened the way for the Afghan troops to come in aid of the Sikhs. The fort was conquered by Sirdar Chatter Singh, the father of Sher Singh.

Gough received the information that the Sikh army was in position some 14 miles distance ; that its left rested on the low hills of Rasul, its centre on the Fateh-Shah-Chak and its right on Mung, near Chillianwala. On 12 January he broke up his camp near Halah and advanced towards Chillianwala to give battle, which shook the foundations of the British Empire in India. Though the victory gained by the nationalists over the British was shortlived, yet it gave them satisfaction and pride, and they could boast later that in the battle of Chillianwala they had met the British not unequally.


GOUGHS ADVANCE
TO CHILIANWALA
TO
ESHAWAR
RAWALPINDI
MARCH 14 1849
JHELUM
P U N J A B
RASUL
CHILIANWALA
JAN 13
1849
JHELUM R
FEB 21
GUJRAT
SHADIWAL
WAZIRABAD
DEC 1848
RAMNUGUR
NOV 21 1848
CHENAB R
RAVI R
LAHORE
TO MULTAN
approx 100 miles
0 10 20 30 40 50
MILES

British Plan

I left the narrative with Lord Gough and his entire force marching to attack the Sikh army which was positioned with its left rested on the low hills of Rasul, its centre on the village of Fateh Shah-ka-Chak and its right on Mung. General Gough gave out his plan to his formation commanders in his tent on 12 January. This was precisely as follows.

Gough got the intelligence that Sikh defences where in two lines. One was manned by Sikh regulars, which extended from Lucknawala, Fateh Shah-ka-Chak to Kot Baluch. The irregular troops were occupying defences along the river line, from Mung to the hill of the Rasul. His plan was to attack their centre, at the junction point of Sikh regulars and irregulars. This he thought to be their weak point. Then to break through, turn their left flank composed of regular troops.

On 11 January, he wrote to Lord Dalhousie :—

"With God's blessing, I propose to attack the enemy on the following day. . . . It is my intention to penetrate the centre of their line, cutting off the regular from the irregular portion of their army. The only fear I have is that the former, when routed, will throw themselves into the jungle close to which they are stationed, but I hope they will fight for their salts, and if so, and I can get close to them, it will be hard if I cannot take their guns, twenty-two in number. Kotlia and Mung I shall easily dispose of, with about thirty more guns. In all, they have sixty-two guns and about forty thousand men. I shall, I hope, take into action sixty guns and from eleven thousand to twelve thousand men."

From this letter, it appears the British General was quite confident to finish the war at Chillianwala.

Preliminary Engagements

After traversing 5 or 6 miles, Gough halted and sent his engineers for reconnaisance. They brought the information that the road was clear and practicable for guns and the enemy was marching from Rasul with the intention to take up position in the plain. Hearing this, Gough decided to go along the road to Rasul. He had not gone far, when the deserters informed him through the political agent, Major Mackeson, about the presence of enemy on their left, in the neighbourhood of the villages Mujianwala and Chillianwala. This information made him to deviate from the plan, as decided upon the previous day. He quited Rasul Road and went to the left. More information filtered in indicating small detachments of the enemy's horse and infantry on and around the mound of Chillianwala. On hearing this he turned directly to the left and advanced straight towards the mound, leaving Rasul Road in the rear. This made him abruptly to change his axis of advance and in fact deviate from the main aim.

Lord Gough had some how this peculiar habit of forgetting and keeping aside his operational plans, once he came face to face with the enemy. On seeing the enemy closer he would have only one urge, that was how to "get at him". Durand comments on this particular action of Lord Gough. He writes, "It would have been a very hazardous movement, in front of an intelligent General with troops quick and ready at manoeuvre ; for Gough offered his right to an enemy in position within four thousand yards of him, with a thickish belt of jungle, which would have covered their approach until they debouched and formed across his exposed flank." Good luck to the British that the Sikh General did not react at that time. The detachments occupying the mound of Chillianwala withdrew and Lord Gough advanced and gained the vacated mound. Probably the Sikh cavalry detachments were the covering troops or mobile patrols.

Sikh Deployment

There is no Sikh record available to my knowledge which can furnish accurate account of their number, deployment and order of battle. In such matters we have to depend entirely on the facts and figures given by the British writers.

Colonel Malleson writes, "Gough speedily gained the vacated mound, and from its summit obtained good view of the enemy's position. To bring his army in front of and parallel to it, he had to bring his lefc forward. Whilst this movement was being affected, he had time to examine in detail the enemy's position. He saw then, to a number of about twenty-three thousand, their right facing Chillianwala, about two miles from that village, but less from the British line, which was deploying about five hundred yards, in front of it, their left resting on the high ground of Rasul."

The precise description of Sikh deployment is given in History of the British Army, Volume XII. This account appears to be more authentic. It reads thus :—

"The Sikhs, once again, as at Aliwal and Sobraon, had taken up a position with a broad river, the Jhelum, in their rear, extending in a concave line from the village Lucknawalla on their right to that of Rasul, on their left, a distance, as the crow flies, of six miles. Its front was towards the east, so that Rasul formed the northern and Lucknawalla the southern extremity of their array. The Sikh regular troops were distributed in a succession of villages on their right—the south of this line. The Bannu troops were at Lucknawalla, to the strength of one regiment of horse and four of foot, with eleven guns[1] ; a mile to north of them at Chak-Fateh-Shah was Lal Singh with two regiments of Horse, ten of foot and seventeen guns[2] ; yet another mile to

1. Under Ram Singh.
2. Under Outar Singh & Lal Singh.

northward at Lullianee was Sher Singh, with one regiment of cavalry, nine of infantry, some four thousand irregular horse and twenty guns. Then came the irregular levies, some of them at Moong,[1] in rear of Fateh Shah Ka Chak, and thus in second line ; and the rest stretching away to the northern extremity at Rasul.[2] The whole were reckoned at some thirthy thousand men with sixty guns. In front of the enemy's entrenchments from Lullianee to Lucknawalla and beyond it, ran a line of low rugged jungle heights, sloping gently towards the eastern plain." Ilahi Baksh, an old war veteran was Commander artillery and Raja Jawahir Singh Nalwa was Commander cavalry, who handled the large bodies of horsemen in this battle with profound skill.

General Gough estimated the Sikhs to 40,000, some British military historians put their number from 23,000 to 25,000. History of the British Army give their number as 30,000. From these varying figures, one can safely make out, that the British had about 15,000 men and the Sikhs about 25,000. Out of these 25,000 there were a large number of Sikh irregulars. Their number can be safely put to approximately 10,000. These irregulars were not properly trained in the techniques of war. They were just raw hands, who had come from their towns and villages to fight.

From the above it can be concluded that the trained combatants on both sides were equal in number.

1. Under Surat Singh.
2. Name of Commander not known.

Plan of Sher Singh

There is nothing on record of Sher Singh's plan. But the way this battle was fought gives some idea of how he had planned to fight Gough. Some how he had sensed, about Gough's line of action. Gough wanted to attack his left flank, and centre, and then roll up his defences towards Fateh Shah Ka Chak.

Sher Singh wanted him to make a frontal attack in the jungle. For that he had sent out a mixed force of cavalry and infantry towards Chillianwala. This was done to lure Gough towards Chillianwala, and make him to bring his troops face to face with his own.

The Sikh army was to be deployed in jungle. The jungle was to be cleared from the interior to make places for the deployment of infantry, guns and cavalry. All this was to be done in perfect secrecy. The troops were to move in the hours of darkness in their battle positions. They must all be well concealed and camouflaged.

Once the British Army comes near Chillianwala, then motivate them to attack, engage them with artillery duel and the fire of guns would make their Commander-in-Chief to act in haste.

Once the enemy attack starts, then let them come within gun range. The guns to open up first, then to wait and let their infantry come nearer, giving the impression that there was no more obstruction. Once they come near enough, or busy themselves in spiking the guns, then infantry to counterattack. To an approaching enemy's cavalry, the infantry to withhold the fire, till they come within range.

Each infantry formation had cavalry as its integral part. Troops of cavalry were also deployed on either flanks of the main defences. They were to keep watch, and see for enemy's exposed flanks. They were to look for enemy's cavalry from their hide,

wait, and strike at a suitable opportunity. Maximum initiative was to be made use of by commanders at all levels.

One aspect could not be made known and that is the use of reserves by Sher Singh. Had he committed his whole force in battle and was left with no reserve, or had he launched his reserve force too ?



Raja Sher Singh Attariwala

(By courtesy of Lahore Museum).

British Deployment

The troops were deployed for battle in haste. Sir Walter Gilbert's Division occupied the right and he was flanked by Pope's Brigade of cavalry supported by the 14th Light Dragoons and three troops of Artillery under Lt.-Col. Grant. The heavy guns were in the centre. Left Division was commanded by Brigadier-General Campbell flanked by White's Brigade of cavalry and three troops of Horse Artillery. Each Infantry Brigade had adequate artillery support. The reserve was commanded by Brigadier Penny and Brigadier Hearsey protected the baggage. The deployment of troops is shown on the sketch.

Colonel Malleson writes, "The reckless nature of the order given by the Commander-in-Chief to carry the guns in front at the point of the bayonet may be judged from the fact that between those guns (Enemy) and the troops on the British left who were to carry them was very nearly a mile of dense and unknown jungle. However, British soldiers well led shrink from no impossibility and on this occasion the divisional commanders were men of tried experience and ability." The order of battle of the British army was as follows :—

Cavalry

1. White's Brigade (3rd Light Dragoons, 5th and 8th Light Cavalry).
2. Pope's Brigade (14th Dragoons, Squadron of 9th Lancers).

Artillery

1. Heavy guns.
2. Seven Field Batteries.

Infantry

1. 36th N I 2. H.M 61st 3. 46th N.I	Hoggan's Brigade

4.	45th N.I	Pennycuick's Brigade
5.	H.M 24th	
6.	25th N.I	
7.	30th N.I	Mountain's Brigade
8.	H.M 24th	
9.	56th N.I	
10.	31st N.I	Godby's Brigade
11.	2nd Europeans	
12.	70th N.I	
	Reserves	Brigadier Penny

The Battle

Captain J. H. Lawrence Archer in his book, *The Punjab Campaign*, 1848-49 (published 1878), who also participated in the battle, gives eye-witness account of the episode as follows :—

"The British were now approaching that dense, and, to them, unknown jungle tract stretching to the left bank of the Jhelum or Hydaspes, memorable as the battlefield where, upwards of 2,000 years before, coming from the North-West, Alexander, the Great had vanquished the host of Porous, in a combat, which on the authority and showing of Arrian, must avouch to all posterity, the genius of the Macedonian hero."

"It was about noon when the force reached the mound close to the village of Chillianwala, where a strong outpost of the enemy's cavalry and infantry was observed. The 24th Foot immediately proceeded to dislodge them, but they avoided collision and rapidly retired. It was on this occasion, and not afterwards that Colonel Brookes cried out, waving his sword, 'Follow me, my men, with God's help we will gain a glorious victory.' This incident is of importance, as it has been recorded as one of the causes of confusion in the subsequent advance, with which, however, it had no connection."

"From the mound now occupied by Lord Gough and his staff, and likewise from some lofty trees near the village of Chillianwala, an extensive view of the country, in front was obtained, and the army of Sher Singh, amounting to, it is said, between 30,000 to 40,000 men, with about sixty (sixty-two) guns, drawn out in battle array, and occupying an advance position, which had been taken up that morning, seemed like a line of white surf on the farther confines of the dark jungle which separated the two armies by the distance of about a mile."

"Sher Singh appears, on discovering the object of Lord Gough's flank march towards Russool, at once to have anticipated it, and

by throwing forward his right, to have compelled him to accept battle on ground of his own choosing. The importance of this manoeuvre however, does not appear to have been immediately recognised, and the British Commander, having abandoned his intention of awaiting the morrow nearer Dinghee, where water was found to be scarce, now judged its expedient boldly to pitch his camp in line with the small mud village of Chillianwala, where, at any rate, there were several wells."

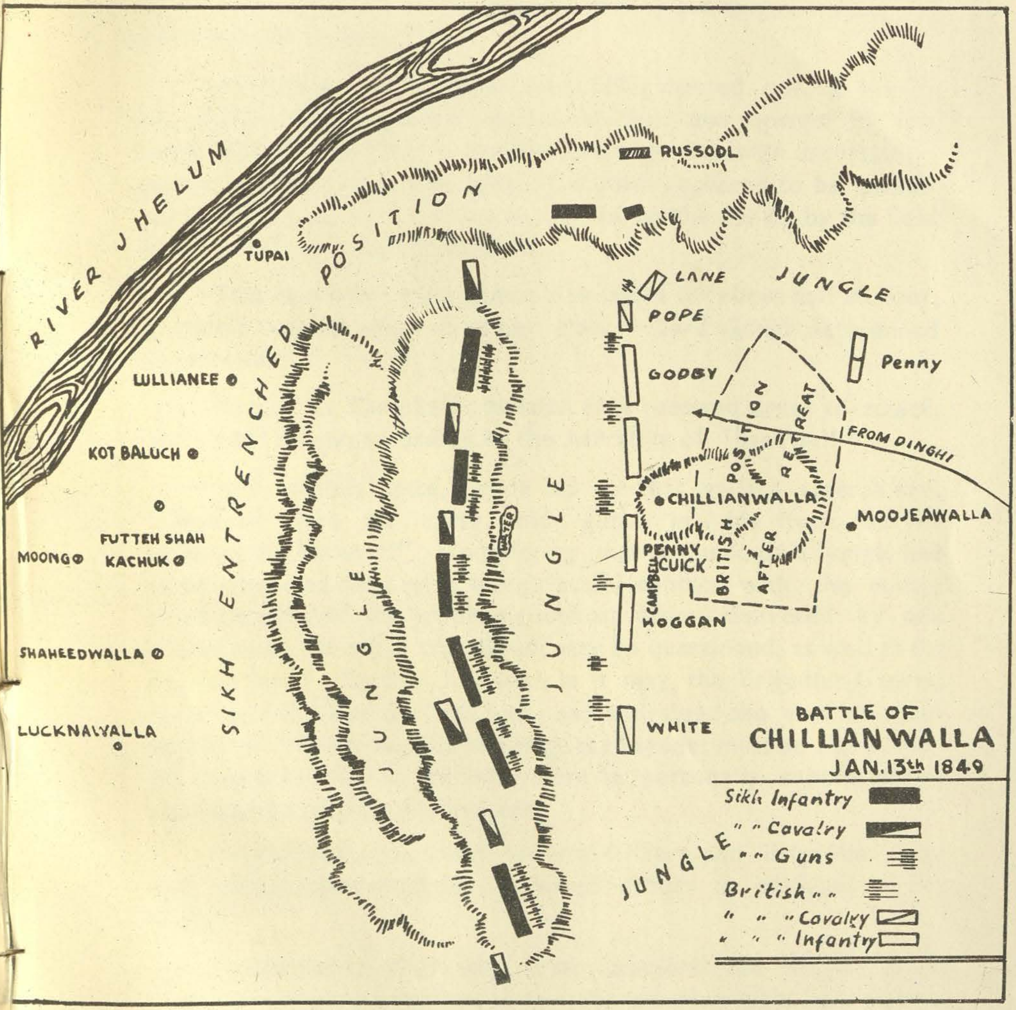
"The regiments had piled arms, while the Engineers were examining the country in front, and the Quarter Master-General was in the act of taking up ground for the encampment, when the enemy advanced some guns and opened fire. A round shot fell close to the Commander-in-Chief, who at once ordered the heavy guns from their position in front of the village of Chillianwala, to return the enemy's fire. But, instead of silencing the latter, as had been expected, the enemy replied with nearly the whole of his field artillery, and thus revealed his true position, which the jungle had partially concealed."

"It has been said that the Sikh leader had determined to allow the British to encamp to such dangerous proximity, but that the importance or indiscretion of his artillery officers had frustrated this design. Now, however, when the heavy guns of the British promptly replied, this strategem being foiled, Sher Singh lost no time in bringing every available gun into action, thus exposing his position, which had been, hitherto to some extent masked by the jungle."

"It was now about 3 o'clock ; the day was far advanced, and the exposure to a night attack on ground imperfectly known, seemed so hazardous, that order of battle was at once formed."

" Sir Walter Raleigh Gilbert's division occupied the right, flanked by Brigadier Pope's brigade of cavalry, strengthened by the 14th Dragoons, and three troops of horse artillery under Lt.-Col. Grant."

The heavy guns were in the centre, under Major Horsford, with whom were Bt. Major Ludlow and Sir R. Shakespeare. Brig.-Gen. Campbell's division formed the left, flanked by Brigadier White's brigade of Cavalry, and three troops of horse artillery under Lt.-Col. Brind."


RIVER JHELUM
RUSSOOL
TUPAI
SIKH ENTRENCHED POSITION
LANE
POPE
GODBY
Penny
JUNGLE
BRITISH POSITION AFTER RETREAT
FROM DINGHI
LULLIANEE
KOT BALUCH
CHILLIANWALLA
MOOJEAWALLA
FUTTEH SHAH
MOONG
KACHUK
WATER
PENNY CUICK
CAMPBELL
HOGGAN
SHAHEEDWALLA
LUCKNAWALLA
WHITE
JUNGLE
JUNGLE
JUNGLE
BATTLE OF
CHILLIANWALLA
JAN. 13th 1849
Sikh Infantry
" " Cavalry
" " Guns
British " "
" " " Cavalry
" " " Infantry

"The field batteries were with the infantry divisions, between the intervals of brigades."

"The reserve was under Brigadier Penny and Brigadier Hearsey protected the baggage."

"While these arrangements were being carried out, a heavy, but as afterwards appeared, ineffectual fire, was opened by the heavy guns, directed, but under the circumstances, with uncertainty, against the enemy's centre, where his guns appeared to be principally massed, and this fire was supported on the flanks, by the field batteries of the infantry divisions."

"This cannonade having been maintained for about half an hour, probably without effect on either side, — Lord Gough determined to advance."

"Brig.-Gen. Campbell's division now received order to attack, and a staff officer, according to the narrative of Thackwell."

"In breathless haste," rode up to that gallant vateran and, "Ordered him to carry the guns in his front, at the point of the bayonet." Considering that an unknown jungle had to be traversed for a mile, before actual contact with the enemy could be effected, the propriety such an order, delivered by one whose name has never transpired, may be questioned, as well as the incident itself. Be that, however, as it may the Brigadier-General rode up in front of the 24th Foot, and addressed the men in these words, — "There must be no firing, the bayonet must do the work!" He then rode away to the left, where he personally superintended the advance of Hoggan's brigade.

"In the meantime, Major-General Gilbert and Brigadier Pope had, almost simultaneously, received orders to advance on the right."

"Immediately after Brig.-Gen. Campbell had addressed the 24th, that regiment was put in motion, and when right had cleared the village of Chillianwala, just where the jungle began to increase in density, ground was taken more than once to the right flank by echelon of companies, and in consequence, under the circumstances, as each company was of unusual strength, in reforming line, overlapping occurred, by the loss of distance, while the

long rows of loose thorny hedges clinging to the men's legs and dragging after them, increased the unsteadiness, primarily caused by the impossibility to hear, at the extremities of the line, the words of command, as they were given from the centre of the Corps. Moreover, the men of the 24th, unlike those of other European Corps, went into action in full dress, and with the old fashioned and inconvenient tall Chaco, scores of which were subsequently lost in the advance, and particularly at the moment of impact with the enemy."

"At length, the jungle became denser at every step, and the 'keekur' and 'kureel' bushes higher. The advance was continued at a rapid pace and in such an alignment as the various companies, now broken into sections or files, could manage to preserve, acting on the independent judgement of individuals, and the habit of previous training."

"After this advance, almost at random, had been continued for about 1800 paces, the jungle suddenly ceased, and when the regiment, pounded incessantly with round shot by an unseen enemy, emerged from it, rapid discharges of grape and canister, swept away whole sections."

"In front, the enemy's position was protected by a natural glacis, a gentle grassy incline, forming a gradient of about six feet in fifty yards, rising from a network of pools of water with abrupt margins, and between these were many trees with pendant branches, almost entirely denuded of foliage."

"There was no time to pause and take breath, even had that been necessary, and the line now dispersed and broken in the advance,—in consequence of the men having been unable to pass through or over the numerous and high clumps of impervious thorns,—made a rush for the guns. Many fell at this moment, under discharges of grape, and, but for the rapidity of the onset, many more must have fallen. The pools of water in front of the enemy's battery obliged some to make a detour, and in doing so, a few began to load and fire,—the pendant branches of the trees swept off the tall chacos of others,— the air soughed like the wind with the flight of bullets. All orders in the wild 'melee' was gone amongst the confused and scattered groups, as they



Sir Hugh Gough, Commander-in-Chief British Army in India

rushed upon the enemy, and, in a short fierce struggle, enveloped in the gloom of the smoke, which from some atmospheric cause, still clung about the guns, captured the latter, at the point of the bayonet."

"So impetuous was the assault, that the enemy at once gave away, while the men of the 24th, instead of following up their success, committed the error of staying to spike the guns. The delay was fatal to the victors, for the vanquished, now realising the paucity of their numbers, quickly rallied, and reinforced by infantry from behind, recovered possession of the battery in a short and violent hand to hand conflict, in which the gleam of bayonets and flashing of Tulwars were conspicuous."

"The Coup d'Oeil of the field of Chillianwala, from the point of view of a spectator standing on the mound in rear of the village, or in the village itself, may thus be described."

"As the extended red line of Pennycuick's Brigade plunged into the depths of the dark jungle, it was for a time lost to the eye. Here and there, the gleam of a bayonet, or a red coat struggling onwards, appeared for a moment and again disappeared. A death like silence reigned, broken only by the booming of guns."

"Rising as, it were on the farther limits of this dark ocean of verdure, the white clouds of smoke from the enemy's guns might have been taken for the foam of breakers on the far-off shore, but for the rush overhead of round shot, and the dull thud, as each successively struck the ground. Then, as nearer and nearer the gleam of bayonets, and the red coats approached the guns in front, the welkin sighed with the storm of missiles through it."

"At last, the extremity of that part of the jungle was reached and innumerable, scattered groups emerged from it, to find themselves in an open space immediately in front of the enemy's guns, from which many were separated by long and intricate pools of water. Amongst these a few trees, denuded of foliage by the fire, arose here and there."

"For a moment, there was pause to consider these obstacles, and then a rush. Sections fell prostrate under a storm of grape, but the survivors pressed forward, and at the moment of impact

with the enemy, the artillery fire ceased, and, in the apparent lull of the storm, hoarse murmurs arose in that smoky stmosphere, which told of the death struggle, hand to hand."

"This was soon over, and the Sikhs, scattered and in disorder, fell back in the gloom, like dusky shadows, and the red uniforms of the British alone were conspicuous in the work of spiking the guns ; when, suddenly, a shout arose,—the dusky forms (Sikhs) again dashed at their decimated assailants, now surprised in the moment of victory. A short struggle ensued ; and the wreck of that gallant Corps, the 24th might have been seen hurled back into the jungle, and retreating on the village (Chillianwala) from which it had advanced, pursued, a short distance, by the Ghorchuras (Sikh Cavalry), who, however, warned of the approach of a new danger, reined in their horses, and galloped back to meet the assault of another brigade, now emerging in the same manner from the jungle on the left."

"Brig. Pennicuick and his son, both officers of the 24th, fell just as they reached the guns. A stalwart Sikh was inflicting gashes on the body of the former, how had been prostrated by a shot, when the son, a boy of seventeen, who had that morning come off the sick list, rushed forward, and bestriding the lifeless body of his heroic father, dealt an avenging blow. But, overpowered, he too fell dead. This episode is given on Thackwell's authority."

"Colonel Brookes, who had recently exchanged from the 69th Foot, and had been on furlough in consequence of his marriage, arrived only a few days prior to the action, and assumed command. He was an officer of martial spirit and chivalric bearing, and fell nobly at the head of his Corps."

"Major Paynter, shot through the lungs, was carried out of danger by his horse ; but subsequently died of the wound."

"Major Harris, he whose horse was shot under him at Sadulapur, was again unhorsed, and as he was retiring with the remnant of his Corps, a single Sikh 'Sowar' cut him down from behind in presence of the writer."

"Captain Williams, a young officer of robust constitution, fell wounded by a musket shot, and as he lay insensible on the

ground was hacked by enemy's tulwars ; but was carried to the rear with twenty-three wounds, one of his hands being lopped off, and, to the surprise of every one, he recovered. He received no recompense for his gallantry and sufferings, beyond the usual small pension for the loss of his hand."

"There were several others, more or less, interesting incidents during the battle of Chillianwala, which have not been mentioned in the many desultory narratives of that eventful day, and amongst others, the following."

"Lieut. Thelwall, distinguished by high courage and quick intelligence, who was acting as a mounted orderly officer of Pennicuick's brigade, had his horse shot under him, and was, at the same time, himself severely wounded in the thigh. As he lay on the ground (where, had he remained, the enemy would have despatched him, as they did all those who were unable to follow the retreat of the unfortunate brigade), he was surprised by his favourite horse—which he had recently sold to the Brigade Major (Harris), who had just been killed—trotting up to him riderless. Recognising his old master, he appeared to offer his services in a friendly manner. The providential opportunity was not to be lost ; and the wounded officer mounting the poor animal, which seemed to understand the necessity for his standing as still as possible, rode to the rear."

"As Pennycuick's shattered brigade rapidly made for the village of Chillianwala, pursued for a very short distance by a few horsemen, Hoggan's brigade, on the left, came upon the scene of the disaster, and charging up to the batteries in their front, drove the Sikhs before them with heavy slaughter, and then changing direction to the right, speedily recovered the ground won and lost by their less fortunate and unsupported (without artillery support) comrades of the right brigade."

"In the meantime, the enemy's horsemen arrested in their pursuit by the sudden attack of Hoggan's brigade on the position from which they had issued, the defeated brigade might have been seen from a slight elevation of the ground, making its way in a mass, to the village in rear, after which it seemed to disappear."

"It may be observed, that the annals of British warfare

present few such losses by a single Corps as were sustained by the 24th Foot in this action."

"Penny's reserve brigade, consisting of the 15th and 69th Native infantry, was meantime, ordered to retrieve the disaster of Pennycuick's brigade ; but, owing to the nature of the ground, where the point d'appui' was to a certain extent obscure, it inclined too much to the right, and after some sharp fighting, in which its loss was 123, including five European officers, it eventually succeeded in reaching God-By's brigade, with which, during the remainder of the day, it co-operated."

"In its advance, Pennycuick's brigade was the only one that had not the assistance of flanking batteries of artillery, an oversight, which Brig.-Gen. Campbell discovering, promptly despatched Lieut. Sweton Grant, one of his orderly officers, to repair. But it was too late. "The light field pieces which ought to have covered the advance, had unaccountably been left behind. Standing there alone,—the Brigadier, Colonel and Major, already fallen,"—without an adjutant, far that officer, owing to an early wound in one of his hands, had not advanced far with the Corps,—and without a single mounted officer,—for although the senior Captain (Black ford) was mounted for the day, as acting field officer, he had, unfortunately, been prevented from proceeding farther than a little way beyond the village,—with thirteen officers killed on the spot, and ten wounded, out of a total of twenty-nine ; while of about 960 which followed them an hour before, scarcely one-half remained untouched by the "Showers of grape and musketry poured in from battery and thicket,"—it was scarcely surprising, that "the brave, but raw young soldiers of the 24th, should have been driven head long from the position which they had captured."

"Had the other brigades suffered under such a disadvantage as the absence of supporting artillery, a "Subaltern of the 2nd European regiment" has shown, that the day would probably have been lost."

"The 25th and 45th Native Infantry, advancing on the right and of the 24th Foot, although they did not succeed in keeping up with the latter Corps, in time to support it, when it had reached the enemy's guns, nevertheless, sustained heavy loss. Of the 25th,

three officers and 201 men, and of the 45th, four officers and 75 men were placed *hors de combat*, while the two regiments lost all their standards."

"In consequence, not only of the comparatively rapid advance of the 24th,—which, never doubled as has been asserted, until it had emerged from the jungle, but also of the density and intricacy of the latter,—the Native Infantry Corps on its flanks were unable to support its charge ; and, says Thackwell, "it fell to the lot of this gallant regiment to experience an atmosphere solely compounded of fire, grape, and round shot, to counteract which, there was no artillery and no fire of musketry—for the men were unloaded."

"It has been said that the 24th lost its colours, but the fact is, it lost only one, namely, the Queen's colour, and this was a pure accident, arising from the circumstances of the battle. The centre of the regiment, where the standards are always carried, was nearly annihilated by the enemy, whose fire was, for a considerable time, concentrated upon it."

"Amidst the jungle, it was tantamount to an impossibility for many men of a regiment to keep their eyes on the colours at the same time. The colours and their bearers were often levelled to the earth at the same moment. Their falling was apt to be unnoticed, and, in consequence, eight stand of colours were lost in this way, in the jungle of Chillianwala. On the other hand, unlike the other Corps of the army, the 29th Foot took the sensible precaution of casing their standards."

"Whether through an oversight, or a mistaken interpretation of the Brigadier-General's order, that there "must be no firing", the 24th Foot, covered by its Grenadier Company in skirmishing order, certainly advanced unloaded. But the Colonel, it must be obvious, could not, as has been said, have caused the men to move, at the double by waving his sword ; for in the intricacies of the jungle, he could have been seen, at most, only by a few of the men immediately behind him, and these could not have directed the movements of their comrades further off, with whom they soon became unconnected."

"One of the principal causes of the irregularity of this advance may be attributed, perhaps, to the difficulty of sufficient

supervision on the part of the other mounted officers. While the fatal result was, partly due, to the Native Corps on either flank of the 24th Foot, not having reached the enemy's position in time to support the attack of the latter. But the absence of the usual batteries of artillery, as before observed, covering the advance of other brigades, must be regarded as the principal cause of the disaster in this instance."

"Why the batteries attached to this brigade," says Thackwell, "were left in the background, is a question which must be left to Sir Colin Campbell and Lord Gough."

"Lieut. Sweton Grant of the 24th, who was orderly officer to Brig.-Gen. Campbell, told me that the latter perceiving when, however, too late, this oversight, sent him scouring the field to find the batteries, but that he failed to discover them."

"In this matter, for reprehension, Pennycuick was not prominently implicated. One party declared the Chief ordered that the batteries should be immediately stormed with the bayonet. Thereby implying the absence of all necessity for the use of guns. The other retorts, that the only order given was to advance, and that no General of Division, furnished with artillery, ever went into action without it."

"This is what Captain Archer mentioned in his book about the action fought by Brig.-Gen. Campbell's right brigade under Brig. Pennycuick. Campbell's left brigade had advanced under Brig. Hoggan. Colonel Malleson writes, "Colin Campbell, all this time, was with the left (Hoggan's Brigade). That Brigade, facing, as I have said, the long gap between the left of the right division of the Sikh army, commanded by Atar Singh, and the right of the centre division, with which was Sher Singh, had, pushing on without meeting with opposition, penetrated the gap, and wheeling to the right, had placed itself on the flank of the Sikh Centre. This position however, was not so advantageous as it would at a first glance seem to be ; for, whilst the right of the Sikh Centre, wheeling in an incredibly short space of time, opposed a firm front to the British Brigade, the entire right division, breaking from the opposition offered to their advance by the Cavalry of Thackwell and the guns of Brind, wheeled to their left and fell on the rear and left flank of Campbell. The latter then, soon found

himself engaged in front, flank, and rear his sole chance of success resting on the courage and discipline of his men. The faith which Colin Campbell ever possessed in the British soldier was proved on this occasion to be well founded, for never did men deserve better of their country than during that mortal struggle, and on that strange day of stern vicissitudes, did 61st."

"Captain Lawrence Archer describes the above action as follows.

"Brig.-Gen. Campbell placed himself at the head of Hoggan's brigade. The 61st Foot was frequently surrounded, but by the rapid wheeling of companies—a circumstance so characteristic of the whole action,—in almost every direction, it gloriously repelled the several attacks made upon it."

"On nearing the Sikh position, Campbell poured in volleys of musketry ; and 61st, bringing its left shoulders foward, re-took the guns which the 24th had just been obliged to abandon. So resolute, however, were the Sikhs, that profiting by the numerical inferiority of this brigade, they turned against the 61st, those guns, which, but a few minutes before, the later had captured, but had failed effectually to spike."

"The contest here," says General Thackwell, "was more equal, and better maintained than in any other quarter. The Brig.-Gen. (Campbell) himself was wounded in the act of cutting down a Khalsa gunner. The 30th and 46th Native Infantry supported the 61st Foot with steadiness and courage."

"Captain Archer continues, "Under the eye of the Brigadier-General himself, and led by the gallant Mcleod, it is but just to observe, that the 61st, and its faithful comrades of the 36th and 46th, mainly contributed, on the left, to readjust the trembling scale of victory."

Colonel Malleson writes, "Leaving Campbell thus making head against considerable odds, I must proceed with the reader to the British right. There Gilbert had to encounter difficulties not less great than those which the other divisional leaders had encountered. He too, had to storm batteries supported by infantry, and covered by jungle, in his front, and ; what was worse,

when he was deeply engaged by the enemy, he had to see his flanks uncovered, the left by the defeat of Pennycuick's brigade, the right by the repulse of the cavalry, presently to be related. Nor had his own front attack been entirely successful. The left regiment of his right brigade, the 56th Native Infantry, after making head with great gallantry against superior numbers, and losing eight officers and three hundred and twenty-two men killed and wounded, had been forced back. The Sikhs, availing themselves of the gap thus produced, had separated the two brigades, the one from the other, and these found themselves now like Hoggan's brigade on the left, assailed, each on its own account, on front, rear and flanks."

The Colonel continues, "In this crises when every thing seemed to frown on the British army, the behaviour of the Bengal Horse Artillery, was superb. Splendid as is the record of that noble regiment, it may be confidently asserted that never did it tend more to save a rash and head strong General from the defeat he deserved, than on that memorable 13th January. The battery of Dawes attached to Gilbert's division was, at the crises I have described of special service. In spite of jungle and every difficulty whenever in a moment of peril, he was most needed, Dawes was sure to be at hand."

The above phase of operation is described by Archer as follows. "Gilbert's left brigade, supported by artillery and commanded by Brigadier Mountain,—who afforded a good example in leading on his men,—had reached the rear of that part of enemy's position, which had just been attacked by the 24th, and which the 61st was no simultaneously assailing, when the gallant 29th Foot—judiciously advancing with their standards cased, and prepared for hard work,—encountered the most resolute resistance ; but with that determined valour, raised to heroism by the proud sentiment of *esprit de corps*, for which this regiment has always been distinguished, these experienced soldiers carried all before them, and spiked several guns, only five of which, however, were secured."

"This brigade, like all others, was received with an incessant shower of grape and musketry. But, as often happens, the best services, modestly performed, often escape the general notice,



Colin Campbell
(*By courtesy of National Army Museum, Camberley, Surrey*).



Major General Sir Walter Raleigh Gilbert
(By courtesy of India Office Library).

while others, comparatively useless, are eulogized."

"The 56th Native Infantry boldly advanced upto the hostile batteries, with undaunted courage, under its leader, the gallant Bamfield, who, however, fell, mortally struck by a bullet, and sunk bleeding into the arms of his son."

"Eight officers, and 322 men of this Corps, were here killed and wounded,—the colours were lost, and, in the confusion of a combat in which each regiment seemed to fight its own distinct battle, this gallant Corps yielded to superior numbers, and was driven back by its brave adversaries, who, however, paid dearly for their momentary success."

"The other regiment of this brigade,—the 30th Native Infantry, encouraged by the noble example of the 29th Foot, went well to the front, as its roll of killed and wounded,—eleven officers, and 285 men fully attests. It, too, lost one of its colours."

"At the same time, the right brigade of Gilbert's Infantry division, under Godby, had got penetrated far into the jungle, when it was assailed on both flanks, in front, and also in rear, in consequence of which, the 2nd Bengal European regiment was compelled to meet the enemy at every point, and, at last, to charge, rear rank in front, while Dawes Battery was clearing the way for their further advance, and the 31st and 70th Native Infantry ably maintained their ground."

"The word came for the infantry to advance, 'Fix bayonets! Load! Deploy into line! Quick march!' and into the jungle we plunged with a deafening cheer, the roll of musketry increasing every moment. On we went at a rapid double, dashing through the bushes (The jungle was not so dense on the right as in the centre, for such an advance would have been impossible in front of the village of Chillianwala), and bounding over every impediment; faster rolled the musketry,—crash upon crash the cannon poured forth its deadly contents. On swept our brigade, and gaining an open space in the jungle, the whole of the enemy's line burst on our view. "Charge!" ran the word through our ranks, and the men bounded forward like angry bully dogs pouring in a murderous fire. The enemy's bullets whizzed above our heads. The very

air seemed teeming with them. Man after man was struck down .... Onward we went with a steadiness which nothing could resist. The enemy fired a last volley, wavered, and then turned and fled. Pursuit in jungle like that, where we could not see twenty yards before us, was useless, so we halted, and began to collect our wounded,—and when all of a sudden a fire was opened upon us in our rear. A large body of the enemy had turned our flank in the jungle and got between us and the rest of the troops. Another party was on our left, and we found ourselves with our light Field battery, completely surrounded and alone in the field. The word was given,—'Right about face, and we advanced steadily loading and firing as we went.'

"Captain Dawe's battery was the saving of us. As the Cavalry was bearing down, the Brigadier shouted, — 'A shower of grape in there'............and a salvo was poured in, that sent horse and man head over heels in heaps ....The fire was fearful; the atmosphere seemed alive with balls. I can only compare it to a storm of hail ....All this time the enemy were dodging about the bushes, banging away at us, and then disappearing."

"At last General Gilbert rode up and said to Steel, —Well Major, how are you ? Do you think you are near enough to charge? 'By all means,' said Steel. 'Well, then, let's see how you can do it.' "

"Men of the 2nd Europeans, prepare to charge, — Charge !" and on we went with a stunning cheer. Poor Nightingale was shot, and fell at my feet. The Sikhs fought like devils, singly sword in hand, and strove to break through our line ....After a short struggle, we swept them back before us.

"We were on extreme right and the thickness of the jungle prevented our seeing what was going on else where."

"We took three of their guns in our second charge and spiked them on the ground ....Several of our wounded were cut to pieces in the rear ....Surrounded, as we were, it could not be avoided."

Colonel Malleson writes, "I have stated that whilst Gilbert's left had been uncovered by the defeat of Pennycuick's brigade, and

his centre broken by the crushing in of the 56th Native infantry, his right had been exposed by the repulse of the British cavalry. It happened like this. The cavalry on the right was commanded by Brigadier Pope, an officer in infirm health. It included a portion of the 9th Lancers, the 14th Light Dragoons, the 1st and 6th Light Cavalry. Either by some order or misapprehension of an order this brigade was brought into a position in front of Christie's Horse Artillery on the right of Gilbert's division — thus interfering with the fire of his guns and otherwise hampering it. Before Pope could rectify his mistake, a body of the enemy's horsemen, suddenly emerging from the jungle, charged his brigade, and one of them singling out Pope, cut him across the head with a 'Tulwar'. The brigade, taken by surprise had halted, waiting for orders. In consequence of the severe wound of the Commander, no orders came, and the brigade, left to itself, and threatened by another body of horsemen, dashed, panic-stricken to the rear, rushing over and upsetting guns, gunners and gun wagons in their head long route. The Gurchuras (Sikh horsemen), whose inferior numbers did not justify this scare, pursued their flying enemy closely, dashed among the guns, but down Major Christie, completely taken by surprise, and many gunners with him, captured all the guns of Christie's troop and two of Huish's, and would have penetrated to the General Staff, but for the gallantry of the 9th Lancers. These rallied behind the guns and checked the body of 'Gurchuras'."

Colonel Malleson continues, "Thackwell's cavalry was still in contact with the right of Sher Singh but was making no progress. Captain Unett made a brilliant charge with four Squadrons of Cavalry, against Outar Singh's (Sikh divisional commander) troops, but sailed to achieve any result."

The above action is described by Captain Lawrence Archer as follows. "Sir Joseph Thackwell, Second in Command, and General of the Cavalry was on the extreme left. With White's Cavalry brigade and three troops of Horse Artillery, under Brind, he advanced some distance, and opened fire on that portion of the enemy, which was under the command of Outar Singh, who appeared to be seeking an opportunity to turn the flank of the British."

"The Cannonade had not been of long duration, when a body

of Ghorchuras made a demonstration to their right, with the evident intention of penetrating to the rear. To prevent this being carried out, Unett's squadron of the 3rd Light Dragoons, and three squadrons of the 5th Light Cavalry were ordered to charge, which they did in line. The Sikhs opened a desultory matchlock fire."

"The 3rd Light Dragoons forcing their way through the hostile ranks, never pulled rein until they had gone some distance beyond the enemy. Unett, severely wounded, with his men dispersed, resolved with the few near him, to cut his way back, while Stisted and Macqueen returned as they could."

"The 5th Cavalry, despite the earnest exhortations of their gallant officers, avoiding collision with the foe, retired with precipitation."

"The fate of Unett, and his Squadron, seemed inevitable, when at length they were seen to emerge from their perilous position with honour to themselves."

"Unett and Stisted were wounded, and many of their men were killed and wounded. No mention, however, was made of the devotion of these brave officers in the body of Lord Gough's despatch, although some days after the action, his lordship visited the former, and promised to recomend him for promotion."

"The enemy's fire had now slackened, when Brind received an order from the Commander-in-Chief to move his guns to the right flank ; and shortly after, White's brigade was directed to conform to that movement. But no sooner had the 3rd Light Dragoons been put in motion, than the enemy's fire was redoubled."

"In the perplexing intricacies of the jungle, Brigadier Pope's Cavalry brigade, which included a portion of the 9th Lancers, as well as the 14th Light Dragoons, not only overlapped the troops of Horse Artillery, on the right of Sir W.R. Gilbert's division, but even got in front of the latter, so that when the former found it necessary to open fire, the cavalry proved an unexpected obstruction."

"During his advance, Brigadier Pope, who was at the time in bad health, received a severe wound from a "Tulwar" on the head ;

and it appears that a temporary halt was ordered in consequence, when the Sikh Cavalry skirmishing in front, were emboldened by what they mistook for hesitation."

"Meanwhile, Major Christie, commanding the Horse Artillery, on the right of Gilbert's division, had scarcely expressed astonishment at the movement of Pope's brigade, when, suddenly, the latter was observed to be in full retreat on his guns."

"In an instant, guns, gunners and wagons were everywhere upset by the rush of the British Cavalry, when the 14th Light Dragoons happened to be pushed against Christie's troop by the other regiments ; and to crown the whole, the enemy's Ghorchuras in close pursuit, entered the ranks of the Artillery."

"Major Christie, with many of his gunners, was cut down on horse back, before he had time to draw his sword. Huish would have shared the same fate, had not Major Stewart of the 14th Dragoons, despatched his assailant with a pistol shot. Many were trampled by the horses. Lieut. Cureton, son of the gallant officer who had so recently fallen at Ramnugger, met his fate by his horse becoming unmanageable, and carrying him into the hostile ranks."

"The few Ghorchuras who pursued, had been mistaken for a larger body, and would have penetrated still farther, had not one or two squadrons of the 9th Lancers rallied behind the guns, and opposed their progress. Some of the former advanced to within a short distance of Lord Gough and his staff, and his escort of Cavalry was preparing to charge, where upon the Ghorchuras retired."

"Meanwhile Major Ekins, Deputy Adjutant-General of the Indian Army, seeking to deliver an order to the retreating brigade received a wound. His friend, Major Chester, hastened to his assistance ; the enemy was close at hand, Ekins, however begged him to leave him to his fate, and the enemy presently coming up, hacked him to pieces."

"This disaster occasioned the loss of all the guns in Christie's troop and two in Huish's."

Colonel Malleson writes, "Upto this point the battle had gone

badly for the British. We have seen the left brigade of the left division fighting for dear life, surrounded on three sides; the right brigade of the same division driven back almost to its starting point; the two brigades of the right division separated from each other, and each surrounded, the Cavalry and horse Artillery, which have covered the extreme right, defeated, and six guns captured, Lord Gough must have been very sensible of the critical state of affairs when he ordered up Penny's reserve to replace Pennycuick's brigade. But all orders had disappeared; several regiments, it might in some cases be said the several groups of each regiment, were fighting for themselves, and Penny's brigade, sent to reinforce Campbell, somhow found itself attached to Gilbert's division."

"Gough had now to depend mainly upon his infantry; and the stout men who composed that infantry did not fail him. On the right the high courage of the 29th Foot and 2nd Europeans gradually wore down the enemy; on the left, Campbell, repulsing every attack, succeeded at last in forcing the Sikhs to give ground. On both flanks these successes were followed by a charge and the British shouts sounding exulting even over the roar of artillery and the rattle of musketry, borne by the breeze to the ears of the Commander-in-Chief was the first announcement to that gallant soldier that he might cease his anxiety, for the day if not won, was saved."

Back to Chillianwala

Henry Durand writes, "We feel convinced that had Lord Gough ridden up at that moment to H.M.'s 14th Dragoons, spoken a few words to the Corps and bid them retrieve the lost guns and strike for the bright fame of their peninsular honour, they would have swept on like a whirlwind, and dashed upon the enemy as heedless of numbers as Unett's squadron of the 3rd had done on Outar Singh's Compact, unshaken troops. It would have saved many a bitter pang, many a reproach, and silenced forever the mention of the unhappy and unaccountable retreat which gave our guns and gunners to the enemy. It would too, have prevented the withdrawal of the infantry from the ground so hardly won ; and all the guns taken from the Sikhs, and all the wounded, of whom we had many, would have been saved."

Colonel Malleson comments on the above statement of Durand, "But it was not be. The words were not spoken. The thought to speak them never probably entered the head of the infantry Commander, who believed he had been saved by his infantry. Heedless of other branches which, well managed, might have more than retrieved all the faults of the day, he rode forward to his exhausted infantry, who were close in front of him. The guns and reformed Cavalry were left in the position in which they had re-formed, as though they had been useless."

The Colonel continues, "The mistake in this respect was the more glaring and the more disastrous in its consequence, as Gough was brought to the conclusion, after he had reached his infantry, that it was inadvisable for them to hold to ground they had won."

"It was 5 o'clock and darkness was approaching. Campbell and other influential commanders then urged him to fall back, pointing to him that the enemy, though repulsed, had not been broken, and that it was absolutely necessary to retire on a position where water could be procured, and where the baggage could be

ensured protection. The nearest approach to such a position was Chillianwala, where, too, the ammunition was stored, and food would be obtainable. Gough yielded to these reasons, and gave the necessary orders."

"The British army then retired from the well-fought field, which had lost them, in killed and wounded, eighty-nine officers and two thousand three hundred and fifty-seven fighting men, leaving on the field many standards — lost, not captured— six guns, and all their dead. Indeed this battle can only technically be called a victory, and most certainly it was of a Pyrrhoean Character."

Captain Archer writes, "The British army bivouacked on the field, while the Surgeons in rear were incessantly engaged throughout the night, in ameliorating the sufferings of the wounded and in performing the usual difficult surgical operations. During these painful scenes the Chaplain of the army was untiring in his ministrations."

"About 8 o'clock (Night), a drizzling rain began to fall, and those who were fortunate enough to secure some of the men's quilts, which were scattered about near the baggage, may have found a little protection from the inclemency of the weather ; but the majority of the Europeans were without cover of any kind, while the Sepoys as many as could be accommodated, sought shelter in the mud hovels of the village of Chillianwala."

Captain Archer continues, "It is by no means so probable, as has been asserted, that the enemy employed the night in massacring the wounded. That was done before ; but it is not unlikely that the country people of the adjacent villages, plundered and stripped the dead."

"The loss of the British in this brief action was very severe, and amounted in killed (586), wounded (164), and missing (104) to (2331) of all ranks. 518 of these casualties having occurred in the 24th Foot, and 176 horses. In Indian battles the missing may generally be taken as killed."

Ghastly Spectacle

Captain Lawrence Archer writes, "On the following morning, Brigadier White, with his Cavalry, scoured the battlefield, in hope of discovering abandoned guns, in which, however, he was disappointed ; while the Commander-in-Chief, with Major Mackeson, the political agent, ascended the mound, before described, to reconnoitre the enemy, if not already retreated across the Jhelum. They were however, perhaps not altogether surprised to discover the enemy, nearly 3 miles off, still occupying their formidable entrenched position on the heights of Russool, on which their left flank had originally rested."

"The scene of the retreat of Pennycuick's brigade, presented a melancholy spectacle on the morrow. Rain had fallen during the night, and the mutilated corpses stripped entirely naked, by those who lurk about battlefields in the darkness, presented a ghastly spectacle ; Those of the British, pallid and blood-stained, were of the hue of white marble, and formed a striking contrast to the dusky slain of the native soldiery. The attitudes of death were sometimes singularly significant."

"Many were rigid, in the position of ported arms, and bore a placid expression. They had evidently been instantaneously struck dead. Others, with their mouths slit from ear to ear when on the ground, displayed the whole of their teeth, and were often thus made to bear evidence of the most atrocious mutilation. Some appeared to have expired in the act of protecting their heads from the blows of their assailants ; and one struck down on his knees, had stiffened in that posture with upraised hands, the fingers of which had been sliced off with the blow of a *tulwar*; the countenance was expressive of horror and agony, and the body was pierced with wounds. In another instance, the wounded man, while still alive, had, with ingenious malignity, been forcibly drawn through a bush, whose crooked thorns,

like talons, had torn the skin into ribbons, giving the unhappy sufferer a striped appearance."

"The remains of all the officers were recovered ; and camels were sent out to bring in the bodies of the private soldiers, piled on their backs, to which they were fastened with ropes, and sometimes hanging suspended from the animal's side. But so horried was the sight of these bleached and mutilated Corpses, so irreverently conveyed to the camp, that parties were sent forward to bury the remainder, Chiefly about the pools of water, already described. On 15th January, many were interred in the same grave ; but owing to unavoidable circumstances, so hastily, that, afterwards, as the writer passed by these slight tumuli, one evening in the gloamin ; the villager's dogs, and vultures, were seen fighting and gorging themselves on such fragments of humanity as they could drag from these shallow graves."

"Mr Whiting, the Chaplain of the army, interred with Christian rites the bodies of the Eurpeans, including those of all the officers, that had been brought into camp. The latter were placed in one trench, the men in another. But there was one exception, Major Christie's body, at the request of the gallant survivors of his ill-fated troop of Horse Artillery, was buried in the same grave with his fallen comrades."

"For the first few days after this sanguinary action, the Engineers were engaged in protecting the camp with earth works. Official reports were being prepared ; while the Chaplain, the medical officer and burying parties, found incessant occupation."

"Shortly after this battle, the Commander-in-Chief contemplated a retreat on Binghee, in order to keep open his communications with Ramnager, where there was "*tete de pont*", occupied by two native infantry regiments and some guns—for the enemy had more than once made menacing movements with large bodies of troops in this direction."

"There was, however, another line of communication open by Heylah, where Thackwell's force had encamped after Sadoolapur ; but this was no better protected."

"Eventually, Lord Gough decided on maintaining his position, until reinforced by General Whish from Multan."



Under this Monument are Buried the Remains of British Officers Killed in the Battle of Chillianwala.

Gough's Diary

A book *The Sikhs and the Sikh Wars*, written by General Sir Charles Gough and Arthur D. Innes was published in 1897. In this book General Sir Charles gives detailed accounts of the battles fought by General Sir Hugh Gough. The authors had access to regimental records of the British regiments engaged, to the diaries of officers who took part in campaigns and the diary and memoranda of Hugh Gough, in the possession of Gough's family. The extracts from General Gough's diary are of particular interest to us. This book appears to have been written, to justify the actions of General Sir Hugh Gough as Commander-in-Chief. Because after the battle of Chillianwala, his reputation as C-in-C had suffered a serious setback. Let us glance through the chapter, where this battle is described.

"According to generally recognised principles, it was Campbell's primary function, as divisional commander, to control the action of both his brigades, so that they should act in concert. But before the advance commenced he formed the opinion that the nature of the jungle made it impossible to control the co-operation of the two brigades ; and accordingly he informed Pennycuick that he would leave to him the sole direction of the right brigade, taking himself the lead of left brigade ; judging that, of the two, it occupied the more responsible position, because of the overlapping of the Sikh right. By so doing he abrogated the duties of a divisional commander to discharge with splendid success those of a brigadier. He himself and others who were present, maintained that the nature of the ground made any other course impracticable ; but in the reault, the want of co-operation between the brigades proved most disastrous to that of Pennycuick."

"Pennycuick's rapid advance rendered the intended support of the field batteries nugatory at a very early stage. The ground for some distance being comparatively open, soon became inter-

spersed with trees and thick, thorny bushes, impending th regularity of the advance and screening from observation, whatever might be in front. So serious was the obstruction that the line became disordered and the companies were reduced to columns of sections. After moving forward a few hundred yards, the right brigade came under a fire of round shot, which was converted, as it advanced to an incessant fire of grape. This was the more formidable ; as the enemy were still completely screened from view. Officers and men began to fall in increasing numbers ; nevertheless, the brigade continued to advance steadily, although the difficulties of the jungle increased, as it approached the enemy ; until finally about fifty yards in front of the Sikh guns which at last came in full view, the 24th Regiment came upon an impossible swamp, or pond, partially filled with water and surrounded by scragg trees and stumps, the ground being much broken. Thus two companies were obliged to file in rear, and so it happened that the centre of the Regiment, and several of the companies on the left were brought nearly to the muzzle of the guns in masses and in much disorder, and were received by a tremendous discharge of grape and musketry. Brigadier Pennycuick and many officers and men fell as they closed on the enemy."

"Away on the left, White's Cavalry Brigade had advanced at the same time as Campbell's division. But the ground was quite impracticable for the action of Cavalry ; unable to see anything in their front, they came suddenly under a very heavy fire of round shot, which mostly struck the ground in front of the line and ricochetted over the heads of men. The brigade formed in support of the guns. On the Sikh battery being silenced by the horse artillery, as already related, Sir Joseph Thackwell proposed to follow up the advantage by a cavalry attack and accordingly ordered the Grey Squadron of the 3rd Light Dragoons and the 6th Light Cavalry to charge. These two bodies led respectively by Capt. Unett and Capt. Wheatlay, advanced. The 5th Light Cavalry coming upon a mass of Sikhs were received with a considerable musketry fire, and, being much broken by the thick and scrubby jungle, were unable to make any impression on the enemy, and were repulsed."

"Unett's Squadron of the 3rd Light Dragoons, coming on a

smaller body, broke through and swept on right through to the Sikh rear ; then, reforming his men and wheeling about, he cut his way back, but did not rejoin the brigade till towards the close of action, causing great anxiety to Thackwell, who feared he had been annihilated."

"This splendid charge was unfortunately attended with very severe losses, for the line being broken by the jungle, the horsemen followed up and falling upon those who were isolated and separated, cut down many gallant soldiers."

"The squadron lost 23 men killed, 2 officers and 15 men wounded, 15 horses killed and missing, 7 wounded. The want of success that attended this attack prevented Sir Joseph Thackwell any further offensive movements and he was obliged to content himself with affording such protection as he could to the left of Campbell's division."

"When Sir Walter Gilbert prepared to advance, shortly after the beginning of Campbell's movement, the troops were thus drawn up. On the extreme right, Pope's Cavalry brigade with three troops horse artillery under Colonel Grant ; Then Godby's (Infantry) brigade and Mountain's with Dawe's battery between them."

"On the left, as the narrative has shown, the Cavalry manoeuvres had comparatively little influence on the course of the battle ; on the right it was far otherwise. The action of Pope's brigade is a painful and unaccountable blot on the day and may fairly be held responsible for the indecisive results of Chillianwala."

"The greater numbers of Sikhs enable them to threaten our right flank as well as our left ; and accordingly, Pope observing a considerable body of Sikh horsemen on the slopes towards Russool, detached a wing of the 1st and 6th Light Cavalry and the 9th Lancers, retaining the other wing of each regiment, with the 14th Light Dragoons, with some guns, under command of Colonel Lane, to protect the flank."

"Then advancing in line with the infantry brigades he found a body of Sikh horse immediately to his front. The guns were immediately pushed forward ; but before they could come properly

into action, Pope with the Cavalry passed in front of them, thus masking their fire and making it practically useless. He advanced with nine squadrons in one line, with no supports and reserves."

"Proceeding in such order and at such speed as the ground permitted, the soon came upon the enemy ; but a charge under such conditions could hardly deserve the name. It was delivered slowly and without momentum ; and almost immediately Pope himself was disabled, and had to be conducted from the field."

"Then occurred an event happily rare in the annals of British Cavalry. Somebody, it is said — who, no one knows — was heard to give the order, "Threes About". Some of the men turned ; a movement to the rear was started, which speedily degenerated into a panic ; and the whole brigade went galloping in a reckless stampede to the rear, in spite of the strenuous exertions of the officers, plunging through the guns and throwing them into wild confusion and leaving the infantry flank wholly uncovered. A body of Sikhs followed on their heels fell on the guns, cut down many of the men, severely wounded Major Christie in Command and carried off 4 guns and 2 wagons. As for the Cavalry, they could not be stopped till they were clear of the field, and were at length with difficulty rallied by the exertions of the Adjutant-General Colonel Patric Grant, Major Haines and Colonel Gough of the staff of the Commander-in-Chief."

"Such sudden panics are among the most inexplicable phenomena of war. The bravest troops may succumb to them. The one thing certain is that they are wholy and utterly unreasoning and incalculable, quite unrelated to the degree of danger to which the men are exposed, though raw soldiers, however brave are, more liable to them than veterans."

"This disaster, however must in great measures be attributed to the astonishing disregard of all recognised rules displayed by the Brigadier in the manner of his advance. It is essential that Cavalry in attacking should form with due supports to follow up an advantage or retrieve a check. No arm of the service is so liable to be disorganised, even in successful charge, and a point to rally on is a vital necessity. When the advance had to be made through jungle, which of itself broke up the lines, and inevitably caused confusion, the need of supports was all the more imperative.

Yet Pope led the advance absolutely without supports, in one line. Bad handling produced disorganisation, with no point to rally on, disorganisation developed into panic ; and the flight of some of the finest troops in the service left the right flank of the advancing infantry division open for the enemy to return."

However, the authors admit about the strength of the Sikh defences, where they say, "The loss of life at Sabraon and Chillianwala was of course, made a ground of reproach against the Commander-in-Chief. As to Sabraon, no defence is needed. As to Chillianwala, a word may be added to what has already been said. That battle could not have been sanguinary, even if none of the errors committed by Lord Gough's subordinates had taken place, for the simple reason that the Sikh position was for too strong to be carried, without much loss. They were adepts in the art of preparing rapid entrenchments : the advance against them had to be made through jungle ; and their artillery was powerful."

Comments

After reading the accounts of the competent British writers on this batter I went to visit the battlefield of Chillianwala. The ridges, the mounds and low hills still maintain their original shape. The jungle is no more, instead the area has been brought under cultivation. The mound near the village of Chillianwala which was occupied by the Sikh infantry and cavalry detachments during the advance of the British force is shown on the map and still exists an the ground. Towards the west of this mound is plain ground, then a thick jungle and now a plain area. About two miles from the mound of Chillianwala toward North across the plain start a line of low hills running east to west. These features continue upto river Jhelum and end on the left bank of the river near Rasul Head Works. Near Rasul Head Works, on the bank of Jhelum is a big banyan tree under which is a wooden board bearing the inscription that it is offshoot of the banyan tree under which General Sher Singh had his Headquarters when he fought the battle of Chillianwala. About four hundred yards East of this banyan tree start the chain of low hills. The war memorial near the village of Chillianwala is visible from the low hills East of the banyan tree. The plain adjoining to the war memorial is the ground, where this battle was fought.

The Sikh general must have held the important features with strength. The jungle in front provided him cover from view and concealment. The open patches in the jungle were ideal resorts for his cavalry and good deployment ground for artillery. The area was ideal for fighting a defensive battle. The credit of selecting such an ideal position for fighting a defensive battle goes to Sher Singh. His object appeared to be, to wrest the initiative from the British. To achieve that he planned to lure the British army on the ground of his own choosing and then to hit them and hit them hard enough to throw them off balance, and then to destroy them with the help of Afghan troops and

the troops of his father which had promised to join him, but had not yet arrived.

Generai Gough's plan was to take the long line of the enemy in flank and to roll them up. In that case there would have been no heavy jungle to obstruct the advance of his troops. With that aim in view he ordered his army to move along the road to Rasul. During the advance the presence of enemy detachments near Mujianwala and Chillianwala were reported to him. He left the axis of advance, turned left and occupied the mound which by then had been vacated by the enemy. The sight of enemy detachments so close had once again distracted him from maintaining his aim. He forgot all about the flank move and by following the withdrawing enemy detachments reached the village of Chillianwala. This brought him face to face with the Sikh army, deployed at a distance of appproximately 2,000 yards. In between the two armies was a thick jungle and the terrain was unknown to the British. Gough did not want battle that day, because his troops were tired. So he ordered for encampment.

By then the British General had come in the trap laid out by Sher Singh. The baiting methods used by the nationalists had caught him firmly. Sher Singh would not let him rest. He knew about his temperament and had planned the operation accordingly. The moment the British army started encamping near Chillianwala, Sher Singh sent his field guns in front of their position to create menace, to annoy the British general and motivated him to attack. Gough ordered his heavy artillery to return the fire of enemy guns. By then Sher Singh had deployed his whole artillery and the fire became intense. The trick worked. Although "the fire was distant and effect innocuous, still it roused the hot Irish blood of the leader of the English army". The drawing operation planned by Sher Singh was being materialised. The British General forgot all about his plan in a state of excitement, anger and impatience. He ordered his troops to advance through an unreconnoitered jungle and attack the enemy guns in front. No proper planning was done, no reconnaisance was carried out of the difficult terrain (jungle) in front, no proper grouping was made, no thought was given to the reality

of making a hasty frontal attack on an enemy nearly thirty thousand in number, in a strongly defended area and occupying dominating features could be disastrous. Gough had committed a great tactical blunder by throwing his troops like this in battle, and the fate they were met with was obvious. He acted like that blind boxer, who tries to strike an unseen opponent and parries blows, he does not know, are coming until they hit him.

Henry Durand comments (Calcutta Review, Vol. XV-P276), "Our attack fair upon the centre of the enemy, gave the latter full advantage of his very extended position ; and as his centre was covered by thickish, bushy jungle, which dislocated all formations in line and inevitably produced confusion in the brigades, besides offering difficulties to the movements of the guns and to bringing them into action, the troops were sure to come in contact with the Sikh infantry and guns in the most unfavourable position, their organisation disturbed, and nothing but their own courage and the example of their officers to compensate for every conceivable disadvantage."

Colonel Malleson writes (Decisive Battles of India, p. 422), "When however, he (Gough) had quitted that road and marching to the left had taken up a position in front of Chillianwala, Gough instead of hurling his infantry blindly against the enemy line should have attempted to take advantage of the faults of their formation. The long gap between the Sikh right and the Sikh centre was the most conspicuous of those faults. A real General might have so thrust his army into that gap as to severe the two wings of the enemy and roll them up in opposite directions. It must be admitted that this would have been a very delicate operation, requiring very skilful handling, and quite beyond the powers of the actual British Commander. But this is only to admit that Lord Gough was not a skilful General."

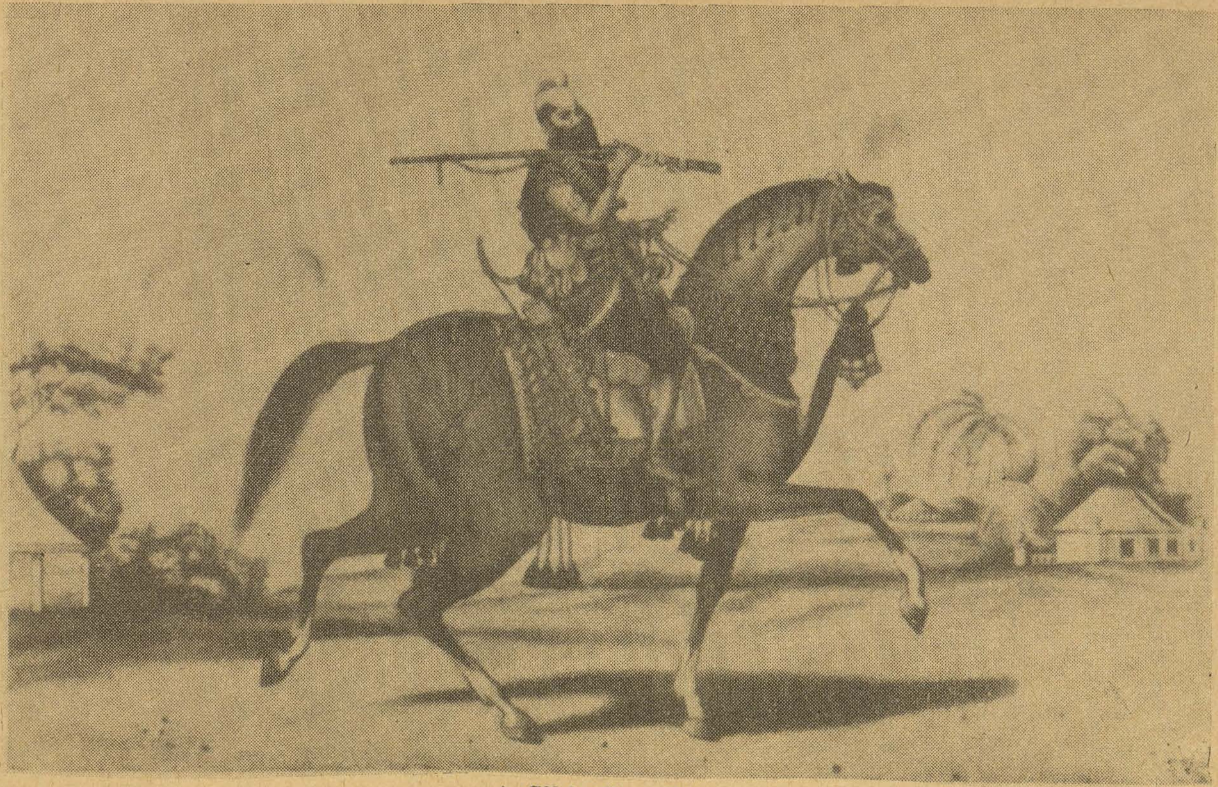
The Colonel continues, "The attack, in the manner in which it was made, was one which required neither military knowledge, nor military experience to order. One can understand how a General, in the crisis of a great battle, when the supreme moment for decisive advance of his infantry had arrived, should launch forward his reserves with the Cammand, "Up guards and at them".

But what is not comprehensible is that a General, leading an army composed of the three arms, facing an enemy about a mile distant from him, whose long line overlapped his own, and between whose position and his was a belt of dense jungle, should before he had exhausted, or even seriously used, the fire of his artillery, turn to his infantry and exclaim, "Up, men, and at them". And yet this is positively the gist of the directions which Lord Gough gave at Chillianwala. To give such an order, what experience, what knowledge, what education were required? A competitor for an army course could have said as much: Probably, having the benefit of the long examination of the enemy's position from the mound of Chillianwala, he would have done far better".

It appeared that General Gough undervalued the strength of the enemy. That is why he ordered a hasty frontal attack without giving time for the commanders even for reconnaisance. He had taken an uncalculated risk by ordering a flank march in the presence of an enemy in position. Artillery was not properly under during the battle. Brigadier Pennycuick's brigade advanced without artillery and the artillery on the right was made ineffective due to Pope's cavalry retreat. The orders were passed verbally, in haste and through messengers. It appeared that in some cases the orders were not passed clearly and wisely by the staff officers. In some cases the orders were probably misinterpreted by the recipients.

The General was in a fit of anger because of unexpected enemy's artillery fire. In that emotional state he sent orders to Brigadier-General Campbell to take the enemy guns at the point of bayonet. The Chief however never meant that Campbell should advance without Artillery. Brigadier-General Campbell took the orders verbatim and did not make use of his experience and common sense. He made the situation worse by ordering Pennycuick's brigade not to even fire their rifles and to take the guns at the point of bayonet.

Some eye-witness accounts are given to show the conduct of Brigadier-General Campbell in the initial stages of battle. Sergeant Thompson (Regimental Record HM 24th Foot Regt) stated, "Colonel Brookes addressed the Regiment in the (earliest) advance on the mound, from which the enemy had retired (saying),



A Sikh Cavalier.

"Men we are going to charge the mound, and by the grace of God, we shall gain a glorious victory !" with that he waved his sword. In the next (and disastrous) advance, Colonel Brookes did not again wave his sword (after), Brigadier-General Campbell had ridden up, and told us, "you must not fire, steel (or bayonet) must do the work."

James Michal (Regimental Record HM 24th Foot Regt.) stated, "i was with the light company of the 24th Regiment at Chillianwala. The Brigadier-General (Campbell) rode up, and told the regiment before the advance, that the battery before them must be taken without firing, and at the point of bayonet."

"On line of battle being formed (Jan. 13, 1849), Brigadier Colin Campbell rode up to the regiment, and impressed upon the men that "There must be no firing, but that the bayonet must do the work". He then rode away and the Corps advanced into the dense jungle, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Brookes." (Ref. Book *Punjab Campaign* by J. H. Lawrence Archer, page 130).

The above statements show that Brigadier-General Campbell, commanding the left division ordered Pannycuick's brigade to take the enemy guns at the point of bayonet. The Brigadier-General had done a big blunder by giving this order. He ignored some basic principles of the art of warfare, and was partly responsible for the disaster and massacre that overtook Brigadier Pennycuick's brigade. Brigadier Pennycuick is also to be blamed for the disaster that overtook his brigade. He should have taken his flanking batteries along with him and used them for counter-bombardment and providing covering fire for his advancing infantry. Brigadier-General Campbell after addressing Pannycuick's brigade left it to operate independently and went over to his left brigade and personally took over the command. This was another blunder that he committed.

The infantry regiments while advancing through the Jungle displayed their standards and thus drew the fire of the enemy on its leaders. Their tall shacos made their advance difficult through the thick overgrowth and made them easy targets.

On the right, Brigadier Pope's cavalry masked the fire of his own guns. He committed all his squadrons against the enemy

cavalry and was left with no reserves. The charge his cavalry brigade made, was slow, it lacked momentum, and did not produce the desired effect. During the encounter someone (unknown) shouted to retire. This caused some British cavaliers to turn about. A movement to the rear was started which soon resulted into a panic. The whole cavalry brigade fled in panic over-running the guns and gunners pursued by enemy horsemen. General Gough bitterly criticises Pope's action in his book *Sikhs and* the *Sikh Wars*. He writes, "The action of Pope's brigade is a painful and unaccountable blot on the day and may fairly be held responsible for the indecisive results of Chillianwala."

The British army after the battle retired to Chillianwala. They did so because of wells in the vicinity of the village. They took defences between Chillianwala and Mujianwala. "A position", writes Malleson, "far too cramped and confined, for it left all the road open to the Sikh army, and the country free too their foraging parties: When Gough recognised this error it was too late to repair it, for the Sikhs, intellectually quicker than he, had occupied the points which dominated the plain."

The Sikhs dominated the no-man's land. Sher Singh carried out harassing attacks on the British army. He many a time motivated Gough to attack him. But the British General had learnt a bitter lesson in the battle of Chillianwala. He patiently remained on the defensive, repulsing harassing attacks launched by the Sikhs. The Sikhs lost a golden opportunity of recovering their lost empire and prestige, by not utilising that precious time in launching a full scale counter-offensive against the British at Chillianwala.

Sher Singh did not pursue his gains with strength and vigour. After giving such a beating to the British in the battle of Chillianwala he should have rallied, followed up with strength and counter-attacked. But he did not launch his striking force, he did not exploit the success which he had gained after such a tough fight. Had he done it the same evening, when the British Army had retired to that cramped position near Chillianwala, the fate of the British would have been sealed in the Punjab.

To expect such an obvious blunder from an able General like Sher Singh looks odd and strange. It appears that Sher Singh was

handicapped by not having enough troops to exploit his success. Perhaps, his policy was to remain on the defensive, keep the British army engaged, prolong the war, till the time he was joined by the Afghan troops and the troops of Chatter Singh his father, which were on the way to join him. Had these troops joined him even a day after the battle of Chillianwala, the history of Punjab of the past hundred years would have been different. But they joined him too late.

Eight days after the Chillianwala, Multan fell. The British troops engaged in the operation, consisting of three brigades about ten thousand men of whom one-third were British set out at once to join Gough. The delay on the part of nationalists to follow up their success in the battle of Chillianwala, the late arrival of their reinforcements and even that too not in full strength. and the fall of Multan were the factors which had changed the tide in favour of the British: Such opportunities once lost in war seldom return. Another battle had then become inevitable and the nationalists had to pay for their faults in the battle of GUJRAT.

The Trial

After the battle of Gujrat, the Sikhs had lost their Empire. Most of their leaders were put on trial. Some were sentenced to death, others were sent to 'Black Waters' and many were set free. Even the most criminal and heinous offenders (from victors point of view) got the right to defend themselves. If an Englishman was appointed as the defending officer for a Sikh nationalist, the former defended the latter with the best of his ability. Even the court composed of British officers, showed unprejudiced and just attitude towards the prisoners during trial.

Raja Sher Singh Atariwala who had fought the British at Chillianwala and Gujrat surrendered at Rawalpindi. He along with his father Chutter Singh had made peace with the British, Diwan Mulraj the man who had started the nationalist movement in Punjab, which caused the British to fight bloody battles at Multan, Chillianwala and Gujrat was not allowed to escape in peace, He was put on trial in Lahore Fort.

The monograph of Diwan Mulraj trial edited with notes and introduction by Sitaram Kohli, Deputy Keeper of Records of the Government of Punjab (1932) is kept in Punjab Public Library, Lahore. I spent few days and studied the proceedings. The evidence recorded throws some light on some hidden facts which led to revolt at Multan. It also brings to light the leadership qualities of some of the individuals involved in the episode.

It shows that a leader has got to possess certain basic qualities. While he is bold he ought to be skilful. In crisis he is calm and calculated. He maintains his integrity with grace and conducts himself with dignity even in the worst situation. Being in knowledge of his men's capabilities, he ought to know the same about his enemy. He must have enough intelligence and experience to foresee the events. He should be patient and tactful.

Likewise that leader is loved by his men, who is firm, fair and just to them and who protects their rights and supports them in difficulty, who is not a tyrant or oppressor, but who understands human nature and deals with people accordingly.

Diwan Mulraj, from whom the two Englishmen were sent to take over the charge of the province, was a popular leader, besides being a viceroy. He enjoyed confidence of his people and the army. Mr. John Lawrence, a prosecution witness when asked by the court about the disposition of Mulraj whether he was humane or otherwise replied, "I can say that I do not believe him to be a cruel man. I think he was the most popular Governor in the Punjab, perhaps with the exception of Sardar Lehna Singh in Kohistan". Sir John Lawrence later became famous as civil administrator and his statue was erected, which remained intact till 1947 in Lahore.

Diwan Mulraj, as already mentioned was the eldest son of Diwan Sawan Mal; Diwan Sawan Mal was a man of extraordinary capabilities. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had changed 5 Governors of Multan in 4 years because the administration of the province was difficult and the people were rebellious and unco-operative. On the removal of the last Governor in 1821 Diwan Sawan was installed, who retained this charge for 24 years till his death in 1844. Sawan Mal by his energetic, firm and just Government raised the province to a state of prosperity. He put down lawlessness and robbery with a stern hand, rich and poor were dealt with alike by the law, cultivation was improved and extended, commerce trade and industry flourished.

At the time of his death that Diwan Sawan Mal had the districts of Multan, Jhang, Dera Ismail Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan together with portions of districts of Mianwali and few more estates. To this task Diwan Mulraj succeeded his father. During the lifetime of his father he remained administrator of Shujabad and Jhang and won the praise and popularity of the people.

The two Englishmen Mr. Agnew and Lt. Anderson along with Kahan Singh Man had been sent by the British resident at Lahore Darbar to take over the charge of administration of the province from Diwan Mulraj, as the latter had resigned. The causes

of his resignation are given in Chapter One. Kahan Singh Man was to be installed as Governor in place of Mulraj. A regiment of infantry, one of cavalry and approximately two batteries of artillery accompanied the gentlemen. The infantry was mostly composed of Gurkha troops.

It is quite apparent that the two Englismen were young, bold but quite inexperienced. The British officers along with Kahan Singh Man and the troops encamped in Idgah. The Idgah was near the fort and within artillery range. An advice hy a Sikh regimental commander to encamp at some distance from the fort was ignored by Agnew. That shows the British officers were not aware of the current events of the province. They had no information regarding the feelings of Mulraj's troops and his people.

Let us see the shaping of events through the evidence recorded by the court during trial of Diwan Mulraj. The evidence of some eye-witnesses show as to how the situation got escalated and became explosive, as to how it could be controlled at the very outset and thus saved the lives of thousands of human beings who were killed in Multan, Chillianwala and Gujrat. Only those portions of the statements are given which are considered necessary, rest are omitted.

Sita Ram writes, "Diwan Mulraj was brought to Lahore on 20th Feb. 1849. It was decided that he should be tried for the murder of Agnew and Lt. Anderson. In May the commission was appointed consisting of C.G. Mansel (President), Mr. R. Montgomery and Col. Penny (Members) to try Mulraj for the murder of Mr. Agnew and Lt. Anderson. Mr. Loring Bowring was appointed to conduct the prosecution and Captain Hamilton, assisted by Mr. Girdhari Lal represented the defence. The commission began its sittings in the Diwani Aam in the citadel of Lahore at 7 o'clock on the morning of 31st May".

Qutab Shah, a prosecution witness states, "Mulraj came again (in Idgah to meet the Englishmen). I was present. He sat again with his back to Kahan Singh. Mr. Agnew had Kahan Singh's chair placed in front and Mulraj said to Agnew. "Take charge of the fort, country and army". Mr. Agnew said, "The army will be retained as it is, but the managers (collectors) of the country

on their good conduct, I did not wish to take charge of the country from you, you have relinquished it yourself. You will now be treated with every consideration." After this Mr. Agnew asked for the papers of the country for the last ten years. Mulraj refused and said, "I held the country in farm, the papers are destroyed through age and insect. I have leases from the government for the revenue of the territory, other papers I have none." The gentleman repeated his demand for papers, explaining that he did not want them to call the Diwan to account for revenue, but that he might be acquainted with the resources of the country. Mr. Agnew said, "The country will be assessed as in force in the time of Diwan Sawan Mal." Mulraj still persisted in refusing to give the papers. After a great deal of argument Mulraj agreed to give the papers of six years. On getting up Mulraj said, "You make so much ado about the papers. What are six years papers? Tomorrow I will send you a box." At this time there was an expression of annoyance in the Diwan's countenance, he appeared somewhat angry and annoyed. Mulraj went away. I said to Mr. Agnew, "Thare is no good in asking for these papers just now, he has become suspicious, he will certainly do some mischief, first you should get possession of the fort, then ask for the papers." Mr. Agnew said, "Never mind I and Mulraj are on good understanding." Then Kahan Singh asked what number of soldiers are required for the fort? Mr. Agnew said, "What need is there, two sentries will be sufficient." The Sardar said, "The fort is large. If the sentries are relieved, 200 men will be required." Mr. Agnew said to Kahan Singh, "If you are afraid, do not go, I will go myself in the morning and arrange it all, you go afterwards."

Qutab Shah further states, "Mulraj with the gentlemen went and showed them the powder magazine (while handing over the fort) and granaries and guns and powder and lead in the fort, and brought them to his own house in the fort, and showed them one room and said, "This is bomb proof, it was erected by Diwan Sawan Mal." Mr. Agnew came out nearly sixty gunners presented themselves (men of Mulraj force.) Their eyes were full of tears and hands shaking as if they would fight, when they made their presents. Mr. Agnew assured them and said to Mulraj, "Let your sentries on your part and mine remain."

Agnew's rude behaviour had not only offended Mulraj, but had also caused the fort garrison to rebel. After seeing the troops in tears and their hands shaking, he still could not predict anything. He rigidly adhered to his plan, giving orders, dismissing troops on the spot and announcing their dismissal in their presence. This was certainly a premature act on the part of a British officer. People of the Punjab were not yet acquainted with the technique of British rule. A whip or abuse by a foreigner could make them rebel or kill.

In the evening the situation had worsened. Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims had sworn on their holy books to fight against the British under Mulraj. The rebellion had spread even amongst the so-called loyal troops of Sardar Kahan Singh. Even a battalion of Gurkhas who were considered neutral in such circumstances defected and joined Mulraj force.

Qutab Shah further states, "The Qazi had not yet returned when Mr. Agnew directed a thousand rupees gratuity to be given to troops and made them aware that any losses they might sustain would be made good and a further gratuity given. I sent for the three officers and the troops gave them the thousand rupees. They all said, 'Give some sweetmeats. What do we want with money.' I left the money with them and reported what they said. In obedience to the gentleman's orders I sent Kahan Singh to call the commanding officer. On their coming he tried to persuade them. Whilst this was going on, Karam Illahi whispered to me, 'What is the use of Kahan Singh speaking to them? 'They are in alliance with the enemy. It is no good Kahan Singh speaking to the officers. Kahan Singh said, 'What is Karam Illahi saying to you?' The troops are allied with the enemy,' I replied. Kahan Singh put his hand together before the officers, touched their feet with hands and supplicated them not to be faithless. They took the money and agreed to fight. The troops of Mulraj were closed on the Idgah. Mr. Agnew directed Ishar Singh to fire grape. I went to tell him when I saw the troopers of the regiment had gone over to the enemy and that the infantry had followed them. I made Mr. Agnew aware of this. He sent for his sword and pistol, put his

hat on his head, saying, 'Have all gone over?' I said that Kahan Singh with a few of his servants were present."

Kahan Singh was leader of the force sent by the order of Maharaja Dilip Singh and the two British officers were to assist him in taking over the charge of the province. But he did not exert his authority. He did not display his leadership qualities If he had any. He acted as pawn in the hands of the two British officers, a stooge, appeared to be utterly afraid of his assistants and Mulraj as well. He was a man of cowardly disposition. As leader of the force he did not conduct himself with dignity in this critical situation. Putting hand together and touching feet of one's subordinates and requesting them to remain loyal is below the dignity of a leader.

It appears that Agnew lacked maturity of mind and tact. But his integrity cannot be questioned. Wazir Ali Khan, a prosecution witness states, "The troops were paraded on each side (in fort). Mr. Agnew said, 'The troops of the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh will continue in service on their present pay, Mulraj will pay you upto the month of *Chet* of the Hindu year. From the month of *Baisakh* you will be paid by the government through Kahan Singh Man.' On the other side there were the new troops, to them Agnew said, 'You are discharged and will be paid up today by Mulraj and go away. What arms you may have of the government you will give up; retaining your own.' Mr. Agnew (while in fort) told Mulraj to remove any property there might be of his, leaving that of the government. On this Mulraj was silent."

Mr. Agnew and Lt. Anderson had been attacked, received wounds and carried to Idgah. Wazir Ali further states, "Mr. Agnew then had a letter written to Mulraj to this purport, I know this disturbance has not arisen with you, seize and send the parties who have wounded Lt. Anderson and myself and come yourself to me at once. if you do not come. I shall suspect you very much. There is one advantage in your coming, that people will know there is a good understanding between us, come today without fail, your coming will allay this commotion.' This letter was written before 2 o'clock and a short time after the gentleman had been wounded."

In the afternoon the Sikh and other troops which had accompanied Man Singh and the two British officers started deserting. Wazir Ali states, "Gulab Singh went away first and subsequently all the troops went over to Mulraj. By 4 p.m. all had gone away leaving the guns. Whilst they were going away Kahan Singh said to Mr. Agnew, "Shall I waive a sheet as a token of asking for quarter?" Mr. Agnew answered, "I want no quarter."

At about dusk the rebel troops of Diwan Mulraj were in the vicinity of Idgah. The civilians had also joined them. The blood thirsty mob entered the place where the two wounded British officers were lying. Bansi Dhar, who had gone to Multan with Mr. Agnew for seeking employment was present with him, when the incident occurred. He was produced as prosecution witness. He states, "A body of men came, in front of whom was a Mazhabi Sikh, who said to Mr. Agnew. "You scoundrel, why did you come here? Was it an easy thing to take the fort ?" Mr. Agnew said, "I come having been called by Mulraj and was sent by the Maharaja." This man struck a blow with his sword on Mr. Agnew's neck and drawing the sword twice across the throat cut off his head and put it into a handkerchief of Mr. Agnew, and taking his pistol he returned his sword into the sheath. There were a number of people around Lt. Anderson, some struck him with spears, some with swords. I ran away from the place. The night passed, in the morning I went to the Idgah and saw both the corpses of the gentlemen. Mr. Agnew's body was on its back with many wounds on both shoulders, the corps headless. Lt. Anderson's body was on its face. After seeing these corpses I went to iook at the Amkhas which I reached at 7 o'clock. Diwan was sitting there in a council in the gateway. I went and stood under a mango tree, some fifteen or twenty paces off. At this time the Mazhabi came with Mr. Agnew's head to Mulraj, who gave an order to some orderly, "Give the elephant on which Kahan Singh rode to this man." The Mazhabi said, "I cannot afford to keep an elephant." Mulraj said to some one "Give him the horse of Mr. Agnew." The Mazhabi got the horse, took the head of Mr. Agnew and went away. I went with him. He threw the head down before Kahan Singh Man. Kahan Singh Man was confined in a garden of the Amkhas. The Mazhabi said to him, "There is the

head of your son-in-law whom you brought here.". Kahan Singh wept and got up. The Mazhabi took head upto the great entrance of the Amkhas, where the guns were, and wetted some powder in a cup which he got from a bag of one of the gunners and rubbed it on the head and beard and whiskers. Then putting some dry powder into the mouth he applied a match and blew it up. Residents of that place and soldiers were looking on as spectators. They were kicking the head and were spiting on it and urinating on it. About 10 o'clock Mulraj sent a Jemadar and six or seven soldiers with two Sikh bed spreads of Multan to the place where the head was. A soldier took it up and these all went towards the Idgah and I went with them. Having taken up the two corpses and having placed the head near the body, they put them on a bed and threw the silk sheet over them and buried both bodies in a hollow in which the water lodged near the Idgah. I after this went and hid myself in Ganda Singh's place of resort for travellers. The next day at 7 o'clock in the morning I went to the place where the bodies were buried. The bodies were out of the grave with no silk cloths on them, the head in the hole. I came back into the Amkhas. Two or three labourers with a sepoy, who bad two silk cloths of Multan met me. I accompanied them. On reaching the place, the sepoys had a hold dug as deep as the waist, in the hallow where the water was and rapping up the bodies buried them in it: About 6 A. M. the following day I went to where the bodies were buried and found them both outside and the head in water."

Q. 1. At the gate near the guns where they blew up the gentleman's head, how far is it from the place where Mulraj was in the habit of sitting in 'Karachi'.

A. About one hundred and four paces. Walls and trees intervene and hide the view.

Q. 2. When you saw a man with Mr. Agnew's head come to Mulraj how did you recognise him as the man who had killed Mr. Agnew in Idgah?

A: I knew him by this that both his hands were bent in. When he killed Mr. Agnew I noticed his hands as I did on seeing them again. Mr. Agnew's pistol too was in

his possession. He who struck Mr. Agnew with the spear the people of Multan designated him as "The first king in Multan", and the Mazhabi who cut off the head, used to go through the bazar and the army lines with a naked sword in his hand, mounted on Mr. Agnew's horse accompanied by the children of the city, who used to say "Victory to Guru Khalsa !', They designated this man the second King."

It appears that there was feeling of mistrust towards the English amongst the public. Illahi Bakhsh who accompanied Mr. Agnew was produced as prosecution witness. He was asked a question by the court, *i.e.* "Did you say anything to Mulraj about stopping the cannonade?". He replied, "That is what we went for Harbhagwan and Jawala Sahai, who were sitting by Mulraj said, "With whom have the English kept faith? Raja Lal Singh brought them to Lahore, what have they done to him ? And to the Queen¡"?

Diwan Mulraj's determination to fight the British and his feelings towards them can be ascertained from evidence of a prosecution witness Qazi Ghulam Hussain. When the situation became hopeless, Agnew sent the Qazi Ghulam Hussain as messenger to Diwan Mulraj imploring him to come and meet him. Qazi Ghulam Hussain states before the court, "Mulraj smilingly said, 'Now I am powerless, a general outbreak has arisen.' I said, 'Though there is general outbreak, you attend yourself, your attending will cause the gentlemen to treat you with kindness and they will appreciate your attendance'. Mulraj said, 'Raja Lal Singh attended at Ferozepur, in return for which he was confined at Agra, after which the Queen came and gave up Lahore, she was confined in Sheikhupura, again Sheikh Imamuddin came in at Thana and he is now walking in the streets of Lahore a ruined man. Should I now attend, I feel certain, I shall be transported beyond seas. I have no children. I will fight in this fort and sacrifice my life !"

Another aspect of leadership which the episode presents needs mentioning. That a man of low mental calibre and undignified habits may become a leader, but his leadership is always shortlived. He invariably meets abrupt and disgraceful end.

Godar Singh, the Mazhabi Sikh after murdering Agnew had become quite popular. The simple folk took him as one of the heroes, When he rode through the streets of Multan on Agnew's horse, mob followed him, shouting slogans calling him the King. But in actual fact he had cut off Agnew's head, when the latter was seriously injured and could not even move to defend himself. He had behaved with him in a very undignified manner. Before killing, he had abused him. Later he stuffed gun powder in the month and nostriis of Agnew's severed head and blew it off. This was the most uncivilized and cowardly act on his part. When asked by the court, Godar Singh elected to give statement. He said, "Mulraj gave me Mr. Agnew's horse and pistol, but I had nothing to do with cutting of the head, nor killing Mr. Agnew. He was killed by one Ram Singh, who was afterwards killed at the taking of the town. I was at the Idgah during the attack, with a drawn sword and Basawa Singh Mazhabi was with me and knows that I did not commit the murder. I should like him to be called.

Basawa Singh was called, who stated that Godar Singh bad murdered Agnew in his presence. Then the court asked Godar Singh whether he had any more witness to call. He replied, I often said that what the 'Munshi' and other witnesses were deposing to was false; it was false that I cut-off the head and that I brought it to Mulraj. But it is no use my calling as they will be afraid to speak the truth. I have nothing further to state."

The courage and presence of mind shown by Agnew in such a hopeless and dangerous situation presents another aspect of leadership. Agnew though lacked tact and farsightedness conducted himself in a dignified manner. Till the last moment when the assasin's sword was about to fall on his neck, he did not give in, he did not request for quarter, he did not surrender, nor did he utter a word which showed that he was nervous or afraid. Instead he warned his assasin in a masterly tone commanding him to refrain from such an act, saying otherwise the British vengeance would fall upon him. At that time Agnew was badly injured. The blood was seeping through his wounds and hours had passed without medical treatment.

In the morning when Agnew was brought to Idgah badly

wounded, he had immediately put himself to task, reorganized his small force, issued necessary orders and dictated letters to the army commanders, civil officials giving the latest situation. One of his letters written to Sir Frederick is as follows.

"My dear Frederick,

You will be sorry to hear that as Anderson and I were coming out of the fort gate, after having received charge of the fort by Diwan Mulraj, we were attacked by a couple of soldiers who taking unaware, succeeded in wounding us both pretty sharply.

Anderson is worst off, poor fellow. He has a severe wound on the thigh, another on the shoulder, one on the back of neck and one in face.

I think it most necessary that a doctor should be sent down, though I hope not to need him myself.

I have a smart gash in the left shoulder and another in same arm. The whole Multan troops have mutinied but we have to get them round.

Your in haste,

PA Vans Agnew."

The judges of the court while pronouncing the death sentence of Mulraj had recommended him to the Governor-General of India for mercy as being the victim of circumstances. "Lord Dalhousie," writes Sir William Lee warner "Gave anxious consideration to the case, feeling that if the crime had been committed while Mulraj was engaged in hostilities as a rebel, he could not be treated fairly as a murderer, since Sher Singh and other Sardars had been allowed to go free. For murder of Agnew, the culprit Godar Singh had already been sentenced to death. The evidence convinced the Governor-General that the Diwan had not premediated the slaughter of the two British officers, nor had he instigated the attack upon them as they left the fort. No doubt, he was in command of the garrison, when the assault was delivered on Idgah where the wounded officers lay and had made no effort to save them ; he had even rejected their overtures for help and seduced their escort for fidelity. But as it seemed clear that Mulraj could not in any case have stayed the fury of his fanatical followers."

Lord Dalhousie gave him the benefit of doubt and remitting the death penalty, sentenced him to imprisonment for life, with banishment from India. "I cannot hang him, but I will do, what he will think a thousand time worse. I will send him across the Sea, what they call the 'Black Water' and dread far more than death (Life of Marquis of Dal Vol. I).

The decision of the Governor-General was conveyed to Mulraj on or about 31st July 1849. But no arrangements were made for his removal from Lahore till Jan. 1850. Mulraj was then taken to Calcutta probably *en route* to "Black Water". On the mere thought of his dread doom Mulraj's fortitude once gave way. He became indisposed and never recovered from illness. For about a year he was kept in Fort St. William in Calcutta, where he was taken seriously ill and it was decided to remove him to Benares. But before he reached his destination Mulraj breathed his last near Buxar on 11th August at the age of 36.

The Graveyard

How soon things are forgotten. How soon time passes and with that memories fade away. In the Village Chillianwala, I came across a few elderly persons who knew that a battle was fought in the vicinity of their village. Most of the locals don't even remember this remarkable event of history. They plough their fields and water their lands, which they have levelled, with small water channels for irrigation. The only thing that revives memory of battle is the graveyard, where the soldiers of British army who were killed in action are buried.

The British buried their dead in hurry, because the battle had ended in draw. The Sikhs also had suffered casualties. They must have carried their dead and wounded in the hours of darkness. They too were not the victors, nor could they claim to have won the battle. Only a few days after this sanguinary battle, the battle of Gujrat was fought, where the British won. After this battle General Gough ordered the erection of war memorial, where his soldiers were buried. Lot of money must have been spent in the construction of these cemetries. Christian families were made wardens of these graveyards. They were given allowances and some land for sustenance. The decendants of those Christians still live there. They show a battle map, kept in wooden frame of old design and tell stories about the battle to the visitors. They also conduct them through the cemetry. They had become intimate with me because of my frequent visits to Chillianwala.

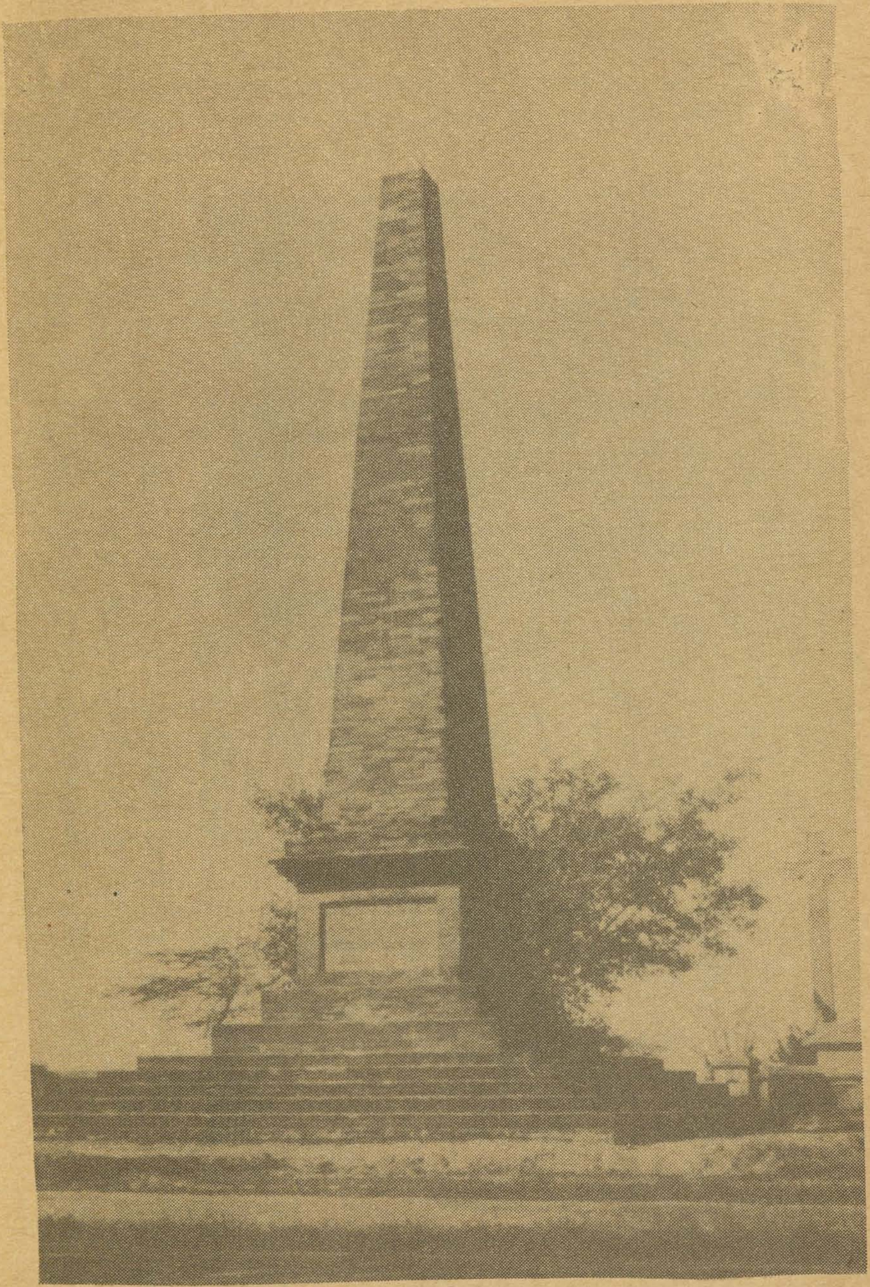
One day a strange incident occurred, which shook me completely. I saw two boys of the village entering the graveyard. They took off their shoes, as they came near a cemented grave. Then, both of them started beating the grave with their shoes. "What is this—why are they beating the grave !" I aked keeper of the graveyard. "Sahib, this is the grave of a traitor, and this is his punishment." He replied, while giving a casual glance at

the intruders. "Who was this traitor ?" I asked him again. "That I don't know Sahib, but my grandfather would tell us, when I was a child, that after the battle of Chillianwala, when Lord Gough came to this graveyard, he was riding a horse. When he came near this grave, he got down from his horse. He was foaming with rage. He kicked this grave and kicked it again and again with his riding boot which he was wearing and said loudly that "Whoever comes to this grave should kick it, because he deserves that." He said and continued, "Since then, it has become a custom. Whoever comes here kicks this grave and some beat it with shoes." He said laughingly.

I immediately got up and called the boys who had not gone far. "Why were you beating that grave, does your religion allow this ?" I asked them. "He was a traitor, every body beats him, whoever comes here." One of them replied in a firm tone. "Who was he, you know that ?" I enquired. "We don't know, but he was a traitor." The same fellow retorted, turned and walked away.

This puzzled me quite a lot. I forgot about the battle and the battlefield where I had gone to reconnoitre. My thoughts centred round this one solitary grave, which had been subjected to such an inhuman treatment for more than a century.

The grave was in dilapidated state. The marble stone inscribed with the rank and name of the officer had been dismantled, probably fallen long ago due to the harsh treatment. "Was there any marble slab belonging to this grave ?" I asked the watcher. "Yes Sahib, a marble slab was lying loose near this grave which we removed to our quarters." He said. I asked him to bring the slab, which he did. On the marble slab was inscribed the name of Brigadier Pope. I was shocked to see that. "It could be true, a man of Gough's temperament might have behaved in this manner—he must have set an example, which later became a custom, followed religiously by their Indian slaves. And even after independence the custom must have been observed unchecked, because who cared what was happening in old cemetries. And even those Christians, keeper of the graveyard were not to be blamed. Because it was the command of their Lord Master General Sir Hugh Gough that "Whoever



British War Memorial in Chillianwala



This Banyan tree near Rasul Head Works is the off shoot of the old banyan tree known as 'Mandiwala' under which the Sikh General Sher Singh had his headquarters during the battle of Chillianwala.

comes to this grave should kick it." Such outbursts can be seen in Gough's personal diary, where he mentions about the action fought by Brigadier Pope.

But was General Gough serious, when he uttered those words ? Did he really mean that his Brigadier's grave, who had laid down his life in the battle, should be insulted by the natives ? Many thoughts flashed across my mind, while I was standing near the broken stones of Brigadier's grave.

Pope, in his younger days had been a dashing Lieutenant Colonel of Indian Cavalry. But now he had become bulky and needed help of two men to mount his horse. His eye-sight was bad and had fever that day. Moreover his adversary was Sardar Jawahir Singh Nalwa (son of Hari Singh Nalwa), a very competent cavalry commander, who outmanoeuvred the British cavalry in the battle of Chillianwala.

Most probably Brigadier Pope had not revealed his sickness. He might have thought it below his dignity to report sick on such an occasion. High fever must have impaired his faculties of judgement and shortsightedness could have effected his ability to judge distances. Under such circumstances he could have violated certain rules of war, which subjected him to the wrath of his Commander-in-Chief. But the punishment this officer had to undergo seldom finds its parallel in the pages of history.

Now my immediate task was to get this evil practice stopped. I brought this wicked custom to the notice of Major-General Mohammad Attiqur Rahman, then Adjutant-General of Pakistan Army, and requested him to do something. "Pope laid down his life for a noble cause, he was killed in battle. By all rules of morality and custom of service, he was a martyr. An insult to his remains, even if he belonged to some other religion or country, is insult to us—we in uniform. We soldiers have a common code of honour." The General heard me attentively and showed concern on this evil practice. Next time, when I went to Chillianwala I felt relieved to hear that the evil custom had ceased to exist. The grave was no more in state of decay, necessary repairs had been carried out.

One day I was sitting on the upper stair of that giant monu-

ment, with a battle map in my hand, trying to locate the places on the ground, where the battle was fought. The battlefield in front of me seemed to become alive with soldiers in their coloured uniforms. I knew it was all a speck of imagination, a sort of day dreaming.

Seeing there, where I was sitting, the same mound where General Gough was riding his horse—, looking through the telescope, trying to locate the enemy guns which had suddenly opened up. General Gough had a distinguished military career. It 1838 he had led the British forces against China. After storming Canton and forcing the Yangtze-kiang he compelled the Chinese to sign the treaty of Nanking in 1842. In 1843, he had defeated the Maharattas and won the first Sikh War. Now again he was leading the British forces against the natives. But this time he was faced with a different situation. Previously he might have learnt the value of Wellington's maxim, "When you see an Asiatic army, go for it." Such tactics could be useful against an army which was divided, ill-trained or poorly led. In the battle of Chillianwala the native army was united, well trained, had a cause and led by capable Generals. He had seen the Asiatic army and had gone for it, but, was trapped. The battle had ended in draw, thanks to his good fortune. But it had seriously damaged his reputation as a military commander.

The British Government, when heard about this debacle forced the Directors of East India Company to appoint General Sir Charles Napier and replace Gough. Duke of Wellington who was then eighty years old, when heard about what happened at Chillianwala said to Sir Charles Napier, "If you do not go to India, I must," Such were the reactions of Gough's countrymen, when they heard about his performance as Commander-in- Chief at Chillianwala.

That place was not far from the war memorial, where Bri- gadier-General Colin Campbell had addressed his order Group. There he was addressing in loud and shrill voice, "There must be no firing, the bayonet must do the work". What a cynical order he had given. Most of the officers and other

ranks buried in the graveyard, were the victims of this hurried, unplanned move. However, such bitter and bloody experiences gave him that insight and understanding, which give maturity of mind to a combat leader.

Brigadier-General Colin Campbell was not a novice in the art of war. As a captain he had participated in the Peninsular War, where he was wounded twice. He took part in an expedition to the United States in 1814. Then he passed nearly 30 years in garrison duty at Gibralter and other places of the British Empire. He took part in the Chinese Campaign in 1842. Despite extensive experience, he had not yet gained enough experience to command a Division in battle. Later he commanded a brigade in the Battle of Balaclave in 1854 and won victory at Alma. He was the same man to whom Lord Palmerston entrusted the command of forces in India during the War of Independence (1857).

And just there in front of me, must have fallen Brigadier Pennycuick. There was jungle then, now it was levelled cultivated land. He was leading the charge on foot through an unreconnoitred jungle. A drawn sword in hand, he was going ahead of his column, passing through a thick overgrowth. His son Alexander, a young officer had recently passed out from Sandhurst and joined his father's unit, the 24th Foot. He was also advancing with his regiment. Did he know that his father was leading them to a death trap ? Could he realise that his dad was committing a serious tactical blunder, by leaving his artillery behind and taking the infantry forward to capture the enemy guns ? Probably he was too young and inexperienced to realise such tactical faults. He was a devoted son and appeared to have full confidence in the leadership qualities of his father.

No doubt, Brigadier John Pennycuick had distinguished military career. As young officer Pennycuick had served in an expedition to Java. That happened in 1811. He had participated in the battle of Weltvreen and got wounded while storming Fort Cornelis. He had led an attack in person and stormed Fort Kraltan. Then he fought action at Problingo. He was there at the capture of Balli and Macassar in 1814 and was awarded a medal. Pennycuick then served with an infantry regiment in the Burmese

War in 1825-26 and fought actions in Afghanistan and Baluchistan. That happened in 1839. He was present at the storm and capture of the fortresses at Ghuznee and Khelat. In these battles he had led the assaults in person. In 1841, he commanded an expedition into Arabia from Aden. Finally he served with 24th Foot. That was the type of man, who was now leading his men in battle. Leading his men in battle was not a new thing to him. He delighted in that.

But this time, he was faced with an altogether different situation. He was leading his men through a jungle without prior planning and reconnaisance. He himself did not know where he was going, except that he was carrying out orders—, to take the enemy guns at the point of bayonet. Where the guns were and how many, he did not know. He had left his guns behind, probably due to the reason that it was not easy to take the wheeled carriages through the jungle. Probably he thought that the artillery pieces would be of no use, in a hasty attack. Probably he took the orders verbatim and did not use his own intelligence.

On the other side the Sikhs had deployed their guns on the ground of their own choosing, in their own time in the jungle. The guns were well camouflaged and concealed. The Sikh infantry had come out of their trenches and hiding in the jungle to receive them. The Sikh cavalry was positioned in the jungle with a view to fall upon his flank. The enemy against whom he was leading his men was unlike he had fought in Indonesia and Burma.

The guns opened up when the advancing column came within range. Pennycuick was hit not far from the graveyard, where I was sitting and trying in vain to locate the spot where he fell. A Sikh soldier was giving vent to his vengeance by gashing his body with his sword. His son Alexander was not far off. He forgot about his own safety, left his company and ran wildly where his father was being slain. He cut down the Sikh soldier, but he too fell mortally wounded. Some one rightly said, "Blood is thicker than water." The blood of father and son mingled and seeped by the scortched earth of Chillianwala. This is how the military leaders pay for their faults in battle.

Brigadier Pennycuick had been killed, Colonel Brookes, Commander 24th Foot, fell too mortally wounded. And in the jungle, the shrill cries of the native infantry indicated a counter-charge. The Sikhs had counterattacked in strength, and the leaderless 24th staggered back, the other two regiments formed of Indian mercenaries also gave way. The whole brigade got unnerved and ran back to Chillianwala. Within minutes the ground in front of the Sikh guns became strewn with dead bodies. Nearly five hundred from 24th Foot lay dead and wounded. The other two regiments had suffered nearly three hundred casualties.

Men were running back in panic, and enemy was at their heels. Pursued by Sikh cavalry, racing through the jungle, stumbling and falling, coming towards that mound, where General Gough riding his horse along with his escort, was seeing their performance through his telescope. It must have been a very depressing sight. Later, on the same mound their companions were buried whom they had left behind.

In this action thirteen officers of 24th Foot alone had been killed. In all it had 29 officers. The dead bodies of the officers were brought back during the hours of darkness and laid out on the mess table of the regiment. Throughout the night, they were kept there. Messes to old soldiers meant much more than mere a dining room, a gathering place or a drinking chamber. It was a place of respect for officers, adorned with bitter and pleasant memories of war.

Brigadier-General Colin Campbell, the Divisional Commander did not know about the disaster met by his left Brigade. He was leading Hoggan's Brigade through comparatively less dense jungle. He had artillery support, which saved them from another disaster. They were counterattacked by Sikh cavalry and infantry. The Divisional Commander received a sword cut. While the British Regiment 61st fought gallantly, the 36th and 41st composed of mercenaries paniced and fell back.

Here is an occasion, most colourful and exciting for a spectator who is gone there, after thorough study of the battle. Jawahir Singh Nalwa had launched his cavalry. Campbell's last hope the

61st seemed to give way. Hari Singh's son seemed to carry the day. But as is well known the British show good stamina and steadfastness on such occasions, the 61st held the ground. Nalwa's cavalry was about to turn the British left flank, when General Thackwell, the British Cavalry Divisional Commander ordered Captain Unett to charge with his Dragoons.

There in front in the open fields, one could see the Dragoons charging in their coloured uniforms and their plumes streaming on their dark blue coats, then suddenly disappearing and getting masked by enemy horsemen. The cavaliers fell on each other like a thunderbolt. While the Dragoons sabred the Sikh horsemen, the latter spiked them with their lances. The splendid charge got disorganised and fifty Dragoons became casualties. Captain Unett received a sword cut, near a foot in length on his back and left shoulder. He got a spear thrust, which pierced through his flesh, near the ribs, and got a terrible blow across the lions with a match lock. Probably this was done to knock him off his horse. During this encounter, the 5th Light Cavalry deserted him. Whether the 5th Light was composed of Mercenaries or the British soldiers, it was a cowardly act on their part. One thing is certain, that it must have been led by the British officers.

Captain Unett appears to be quite disappointed with the performance of his troops, while writing to a friend in England. A portion of the letter reads thus, "I am almost afraid to send you this, and dare not give you a better account, lest any part of it should find its road to the newspapers." He recovered from his wounds within a month and was again in command of his troops during the battle of Gujrat.

So much blood was not shed on the right. General Sir Walter Gilbert was a man of stronger nerves, of calm demeanour and better foresight. Nothing would impair his faculties of judgement and decision in the field of battle. Though he had little time to launch his Division in attack, still he appears to have carried out quick appreciation of the situation and planned accordingly. He might have received the same brief verbal orders from General Gough by a riding messenger, but he gave a thought to it, and used commonsense. His calmness in battle can be judged from an incident. When the battle raged fiercely, General Gilbert rode

up and said to Steel, "Well Major, how are you ? Do you think you are near enough to charge ?" "By all means," said Steel, "Well then, let's see, how you can do it."

His move was well co-ordinated. The two infantry brigades had the support of horse artillery and a field battery and flanked by cavalary brigade. It was a well-fought action, except the tragedy met by Pope's brigade. Jawahir Singh Nalwa's horsemen had turned Gilbert's right. They appeared suddenly, charged deep and fell upon Pope's cavalry, who had already masked the fire of his guns, by a wrong manoeuvre. Pope's misfortune lay in crossing the sword with a man like Jawahir Singh Nalwa. It was an unequal match of Generalship indeed.

General Gilbert, with all the qualities of a good commander, seem to have weakness in selecting right type of subordinates. Pope was so fat that he needed help of two men to mount his horse. His eyesight was bad. His divisional commander should have known it. But the reputation Pope had built up of being a dashing cavalry commander might have overruled such considerations.

While sitting in the graveyard, a disturbing thought perturbed me for a while. The power, pomp and show is for a short while, and all shall disappear and be forgotten with the passage of time. Only a little more than a hundred years ago the Sikhs were a powerful militant nation. They were rich, brave and chivalrous. They had a powerful army, which was founded by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. When he died, the Sikh Empire began to crumble. Brother fought against brother, son against father. The palace intrigues led to Anglo-Sikh War. The army was betrayed, the British won for the treachery worked. Some one rightly said that "A house divided itself cannot stand."

At Chillianwala, the Sikhs had proved their mettle. This encounter showed the military strength and fighting qualities of their officers and men. It gives one a rough idea, as to what this nation could accomplish, had it been united. Who could have replaced them in Punjab, had Ranjit Singh been succeeded by a man of similar stature.

Many were killed, wounded and maimed in this battle. Many families were ruined. What could have happened to the wife of

Brigadier Pennycuick, when she heard about her husband and son. She could not bear it. Her patience gave way. She sailed from England and came to Chillianwala. She roamed about in the jungle and stood near the spot where her beloveds had lost their lives and her 17 years old son had fallen while protecting the body of his father. It is hard to visualize her feelings at that time. She lived in Sialkot, a town not far from Chillianwala, from where she could easily come to see the grave of her husband and son. She got a marble slab laid in a church of Sialkot Cantonement which is still there.

Mrs, Pennycuick was the wife of a Brigadier and enjoyed certain privileges. But what about the wives and children of those thousands of British and Sikh soldiers who were killed or maimed in this battle. Nobody cared to know about them. Their cries and lamentations were echoed and remained confined within the walls of their dewellings.

British soldier had a cause to fight for. He took pride in fighting for his country. He had a noble aim, to build and expand the British Empire. The Sikh soldiers were fighting for a cause too. They were fighting to regain their lost Empire. They were fighting for liberty, freedom and independence. They were fighting for their religion. But what about the Indian soldiers, who were fighting on the side of the British ? What cause they were fighting for, what aim they had in view ? They were soldiers, who later became the backbone of the British Army and played vital role in building the British Em pire, which at one time extended from Canton to New York.

Their acts of valour and deeds of gallantry are not seen with respect by the generation who opened their eyes after independence. Mercenaries seldom find a place of respect in the pages of history. The sacrifices of a slave is for his master and are forgotten or looked down upon, when the latter is dethroned or removed from authority, Only those live to command respect who fight for a noble cause and high ideals.

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COMMENTS

The libraries of the world to-day are packed with books written by occidentals who have for obvious reasons projected the image of the white races and their achievements as simply extraordinary and those of the orientals as of no consequence. Incidentally, this book has been written by a person who is not an occidental but one who belongs to the soil. He has, indeed, depicted the saga of Chillianwala in its true dimensions.

Chillianwala has been named after a village near Rasul Headworks where a historic battle was fought between the British and the Sikhs in the 19th century. Before the battle proper, the author describes in an interesting manner the decay of the Sikh Rule in Punjab after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh ; the palace intrigues and conspiracies ; the internal squabblings which helped British machination, and consequently the upsurge of Sikh Nationalism and open rebellion against the British, which eventually led to this battle.

The performance of Punjabi gunners in this battle is praiseworthy. In the initial stage the harassing fire by heavy guns proved very effective. The guns were deployed in secrecy on likely enemy approaches. The camouflaged guns were spotted by the British advancing columns, when they had already entered the fatal zone. The credit goes to Illahi Baksh, Commander Artillery. Nalwa's Cavalry carried out some masterly manouvres

in this battle. The momentum of British Cavalry charges broke before the counter attacks launched by the Punjabi Lancers and the infantrymen hiding with their matchlocks behind the bushes. British soldiers fought bravely according to their tradition, but they had to pay dearly for the rash and hasty decisions of their leaders. Historians call this battle a draw, yet the British War Memorial at Chillianwala where 586 British soldiers lie buried today bears unmistakeable proof of the defeat suffered by the British Army in this battle.

By his brilliant Generalship in skilfully fighting on a terrain of his own choosing and luring the British onto it ; using the element of surprise and deception ; and his personal valour and intrepidity, Sher Singh excels the British Generals on all counts. The book pinpoints the strong points and the weak points of the opposing commanders in a lucid manner and brings out lessons in leadership and commandership for all soldiers to follow.

The book as a whole is revealing, fascinating, and thoughtprovoking. It has been written in simple English to make the reading interesting and easy. And, because of the author's personal knowledge of the area, it takes the reader into spheres which lay uncovered heretofore. I recommend this book to all students of military history.

Field Area
14 Jan. 1973

SARDAR AHMAD
Brigadier

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Captain Unett countered by Outar Singh

Here is plenty of excitement for a research student *who goes there* (Chillianwala) *after thorough study of the battle.* Jawahir Singh Nalwa had launched Outar's cavalry. Campbell's last hope, the 61st, seemed to give way. Hari Singh's son seemed to carry the day. But as is well known, the British show better stamina and steadfastness on such occasions, the 61st held the ground. Nalwa's cavalry was about to turn the British left flank, when General Thackwell, the British Cavalry Divisional Commander, ordered Captain Unett to charge with his Dragoons.

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